THE Freeman

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

OCTOBER 1963

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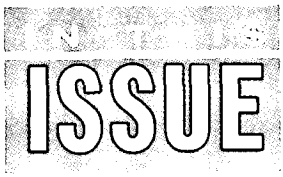

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THE Freeman

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THE AMERICAN TRADITION

7. *Of Voluntarism*

CLARENCE B. CARSON

MAN is in many ways a social being. Many undertakings are beyond the abilities, energies, or powers of an individual to accomplish. Most men not only need the help of others at many times but they also take pleasure in the company of others while they work. Voluntarism is the means of undertaking joint ventures without the use of compulsion. It is the way of persuasion, not coercion; of choice, not dictation; of willed action, not forced participation; of variety, not uniformity; of competition, not monopoly; of freedom, not subjection. If the amount of liberty in a society could be measured, it would probably be in terms of the number of joint undertakings that are left to voluntary effort. Voluntarism is the complementary side of the coin to individualism; it is the means of getting social tasks done that is consonant with liberty.

The distinction between the compulsory and the voluntary is between that which is prescribed and enforced by public authority and that which is left to the initiative of individuals and groups. There are some difficulties with this distinction, at least in America. Where the matter at issue has been decided upon by representatives chosen by the people, they may be said to have given their assent to it. Thus, governmentally undertaken action takes on some of the color of voluntary action. It could be argued with the backing of much evidence, too, that the distinction between public

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Illustration: National Archives

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and private was neither very clear nor very rigid until well into the nineteenth century. Moreover, there was probably never a time in American history when public undertakings were brought to an irreducible minimum and private raised to the maximum.

These difficulties, however, grow out of the confusion of the tradition with the web of the reality from which it is to be discerned. They are added to by the doctrines of latter day democrats who apparently believe that the onus of compulsion is removed from any prescribed action by voting on it. But the fact that a majority favors it does not remove compulsion from government action, certainly not for the minority. Majority approval does not make governmental action voluntary; rather, it intrudes elements of voluntarism into what would otherwise be compulsion.

Man Has Flaws

Assuming that certain governmental functions are essential, the interpenetration of consent to support them helps to make them acceptable and may help to prevent oppression or tyranny. It could be voluntary only if everyone to whom it applied willingly consented to its action at all times. But this is so unlikely that if perpetual voluntary consent were made a condition of the existence of governments, none would exist. Viewed from this angle, majority rule does not justify the extension of public action, for it must still be done at the expense of voluntarism. It only serves to legitimate that minimum of action which is essential to the protection and order within which individual liberty and voluntarism can operate. This conception lay at the heart of the American tradition.

In addition to being a social being, there is evidence that man is a flawed being. He is given to enthusiasms about what is good for other people. Under the sway of these, he wishes to prescribe and enforce by law the particular sorts of undertakings that accord with his vision. The particular flaw present in this consent is a lack of faith. He fears that if whatever he wants done is not made compulsory, it will not be done. Persuasion may not work; exhortation may fail; if the matter is left to choice, some will neglect that which is so desirable. Some parents will neglect to provide this good for their children; the innocent will suffer.

The notions about what must be provided (or denied) by compulsion vary from time to time. Thus, at one time compulsory church attendance was deemed es-

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sential to the well-being of society; at the present time compulsory school attendance is believed by many to be a good beyond question. In discussing these matters with a colleague, I pointed out that very similar arguments to those made for compulsory public education could be made for compulsory public religion. Religion, it could be argued, is essential to morality, good citizenship, and the fulfillment of the individual. If church attendance is not made compulsory, some people will not attend and, what is more to the point, some parents will not require their children to go to church, and the innocent will suffer. Moreover, unless religion is tax supported some people will have finer churches and more articulate ministers than others. Some communities could hardly support a church at all and would be deprived of any but a part-time minister. Of course, my friend was unmoved. He had a sovereign reply. What I had said would be quite valid in a religious age, but this was a secular one.

His argument might be conveniently turned by replying that if this situation prevailed, it would be all the more reason for requiring public religion. Actually, however, I was not making an argument *for* compulsory religion but *against* compulsory enforcement of someone's views on others. Nor should his conclusions be accepted so readily. By what criteria do we judge that this is a secular age? Not by externals, certainly. Expensively appointed churches dot the land, their ministers probably better paid than ever, their programs better supported, membership at all-time highs, and attendance good by comparison with other ages. If many rural churches have fallen into decay, many suburban churches have been erected in their stead. All of this has been accomplished, too, without compulsion. All things considered, it should be reckoned to be a modern miracle.

A Sign of Vitality

Anything that could survive on such a scale in our day without the support of public authority and tax money must have great vitality. It may be true, as many say, that much of American religion lacks an inner vitality. Having taught in the schools, however, I can report that a similar lack of vitality characterizes much of education. Rather than saying that this is a secular age, it might be more accurate to say that a secular tone has been imparted to the age by way of the unnatural separation of religion and education resulting from public support of education. The consequent tend-

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ency to state monopoly of education has polarized two functions which have ordinarily been complementary and has served to drain some of the inner vitality from both. Such a result might be expected from an attempt to intermingle contrary principles in a society.

Why, then, is religion voluntary and education compulsory in America today? No simple answer will suffice. There was a time in colonial America when religion was generally compulsory and education was voluntary. There was a time when both were voluntary in most places. As everyone knows the earlier situation has been reversed today: religion is voluntary and education is compulsory. If the voluntary be conceived as an area, then it was a growing and extending area in America in the colonial period and in the early period of the United States. It expanded until it embraced even religion.

Established religion was still a very live issue at the time of the drawing of our constitutions. For various reasons—including the love of liberty—the Congress was forbidden to establish a church, and either before or in a few decades, states made similar prohibitions and disestablished the churches. Education was not at this time "established" by law, and its future "establishment" would hardly have appeared as a threat at the time. Hence, constitutional safeguards against compulsory education were not incorporated into fundamental law. The door was left open, as it were, for a departure from voluntarism which was not envisioned at the time.

The Great Unseen

The central American tradition is one of voluntarism. The evidence for this is so immense that it has never been assembled, nor is it likely that it ever will be in its entirety. But a mountain will tend to dominate an extensive plain, even if the mountain be little more than a hill. Thus, the doings of governments have captured and held the attention of historians over the years, though at an earlier time in our history governments were expected to do and did very little. Every rock on the little mountain which represents government has been overturned while the fertile plain of voluntarism has been largely untended. This bias in our historians has kept hidden from us the great achievements of voluntarism and has greatly exaggerated the importance of government. If we knew better the accomplishments of voluntarism, it might take less faith than we had imagined to rely upon it once again.

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The story of the American tradition of voluntarism is best told against the background of authoritarianism and the foreground of the current compulsory welfare state. Between these two poles of compulsion lies the bulk of American history. The colonists arriving in America brought with them a considerable heritage of compulsion. They were used to established churches, to mercantilistic restrictions, to monopolistic charters, to initiative for many things stemming from kings or their agents. Early governments were apt to exercise broad and extensive powers.

Religion was prescribed for early colonists in nearly as much detail as is now given to the income tax. For example, Governor Dale of Virginia proclaimed, in 1611, that those persons "who failed to attend daily prayers were to be deprived of their rations for a first offense, whipped for a second, and sent to the galleys for a third. Those who indulged in gaming on the Sabbath or failed to attend Sunday worship were to be even more severely dealt with – the penalty for a third offense being death."[1]

Another writer points out that on the same day of 1636 in which the Massachusetts General Court passed an act authorizing what was to become Harvard College "it granted £5 for loss of an eye to a certain George Munnings; it ordered the towns of the colony to fix wages; and it ceded an island to the town of Charlestown on condition that it be used for fishing."[2] The ubiquitous state is not entirely new to the twentieth century.

The relics of transplanted compulsory authority tended to wither like an alien plant in the new soil. More precisely, authority lacked many of the means for maintaining its sway. Not only were conditions different in the New World but also there was no central administrative authority in America, no land monopoly which could be maintained, no hereditary class to wield the authority, and no established bureaucracy to administer the rules. Unoccupied lands were available for the disaffected; colonies competed with one another for immigrants; men showed a "distressing" preference for freedom over authority.

Examples of Voluntarism

By and large, Americans did not become hermits, prizing their independence to the disparage-

[1] Nelson M. Blake, *A History of American Life and Thought* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 45.

[2] Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University* (New York: Knopf, 1962), pp. 4-5.

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ment of all social undertakings, though some Americans did, of course. Instead, they tended to favor voluntary activities. A great deal of voluntarism characterized their undertakings from the first. The earliest colonies were settled by joint-stock companies which were voluntary economic associations chartered by the monarch. The governments in some of the colonies were voluntarily comprised by compact. Communities were apt to be founded by voluntary associations of heads of families. Indeed, "public" and "private" were hardly absolute distinctions. Harvard College was initially started with a grant from the Massachusetts General Court, but an endowment from the estate of the Reverend John Harvard was the source of its name, and it was to become a great private institution. When government has come into being during the lives of and by the agency of living men, it will not appear much different from other voluntary associations.

Early Education

Nevertheless, the trend was away from the compulsory to the voluntary. This appears rather clearly in the matter of education. Massachusetts did enact a law in 1647 requiring towns with a certain number of inhabitants to provide teachers or schools. This did not become the pattern elsewhere, however. The Dutch established some public schools in New York. But when the English took over the colony these schools "became parochial schools, managed and supported by the Dutch Reformed Church. . . . The English and other non-Dutch groups had to secure education for their children through private schools maintained by itinerant schoolmasters. . . ."[3]

Pennsylvania attempted a public school at first, but it was discontinued in 1689. Thereafter, education was left to private and group initiative. The Quakers, according to one historian, "maintained some of the best elementary and secondary schools in America. The support of such schools by subscription and endowment was a favorite Quaker philanthropy. A large majority of the pupils paid tuition, but the poor, both Quaker and non-Quaker, were allowed to attend without paying fees."[4] Thus, voluntarism developed apace in education. In Virginia, "old-field schools" demonstrated the classic method of voluntarism. "Several families on neighboring properties would cooperate in erecting a rude building, often in an aban-

[3] Blake, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
[4] *Ibid.*

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doned tobacco field. Here a master hired by the parents would teach during the months from April to September."[5] The tendency in the founding of colleges over the years was from government support initially to private or denominational schools.

Relief of Poverty a Private Responsibility

In caring for the destitute, the impoverished, and the disabled, colonists apparently favored private charity to governmental effort. Loosely, the Elizabethan Poor Laws applied in America from the beginning. They put the burden for support initially upon the individual, then upon the family, and, failing that, the local community. This, too, became a part of the American tradition. But voluntary charity was more favored by Americans than a tax upon the members of the community.

Cotton Mather, one of the great Puritan divines, was an ardent advocate of private charity. He taught that helping others was a Christian duty, an honor, and a privilege. Significantly, though, he was not only "a one-man relief and aid society," as one writer describes him, but also an advocate of joint voluntary efforts. "He was a tireless promoter of associations for distributing tracts supporting missions, relieving needy clergymen, and building churches in poor communities."[6]

William Bradford told the story of an early charitable action at Plymouth, with his obvious approval of the behavior.

> In ye time of most distress, there wus but 6. or 7. sound persons who to their great commendations be it spoken, spared no pains night nor day, but with abundance of toyle and hazard of their owne health, fetched them woode, made them fires, drest them meat, made their beads, washed their lothsome cloaths, cloathed and uncloathed them; in a word, did all ye homly & necessarie office for them . . . all this willingly and cherfully, without any grudging in ye least, shewing herein true love unto their friends & bretheren.[7]

Another and perhaps better example of voluntary charity in the formation of the American tradition can be seen in the organization of the Scot's Charitable Society in Boston in 1657. They agreed to assemble a treasure "for the releefe of our selves and any other for the which wee may see cause (to make a box) and

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

[6] Robert H. Bremner, *American Philanthropy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 14.

[7] Quoted in *The Heritage of American Social Work*, Ralph E. and Muriel W. Pumphrey, eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 12-13.

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every one of us to give as god shall moue our harts. . . ."[8]

Many Voluntary Groups

By the time of the War for Independence Americans had become habituated to doing many things voluntarily. The great age of voluntarism, however, was from the time of the revolt from England until World War I. Mercantilistic restrictions were cast off along with the political ties with England, though some of them were perpetuated for a time by some states. A great "common market" was opened by the adoption of the Constitution of 1787. Churches were disestablished in the ensuing years, and religious observance became a voluntary matter so far as governments were concerned. States voluntarily entered the Union. Government offices were filled by those who sought them willingly, without prescription or compulsion. The variety of activities that were performed at one time or another by voluntary associations of people is truly amazing. Wars were usually fought with voluntary armies. Volunteers formed fire departments, brought law and order along the frontiers, made up the posses which sheriffs used on occasions, organized churches, built schools, orphanages, libraries, hospitals, and joined political parties to effect their aims. Men pooled their resources in partnerships, joint-stock companies, and corporations for undertaking large economic endeavors.

European visitors to America in the nineteenth century usually remarked the great number and variety of associations and organizations. For example, Captain Frederick Marryat, an Englishman who visited America in the 1830's, declared that "the Americans are society mad." He listed 22 of the most prominent benevolent societies in 1834—e. g., American Education Society, American Bible Society, American Sunday School Union, Prison Discipline Society, American Temperance Socity, and so on—, but found it necessary to add that there "are many others. . . ."[9]

Voluntary associations ranged from those formed for some temporary task to those which expected to be perpetual. Thus, people gathered in rural America for corn huskings, and women held quilting bees. On the other hand, there were fraternal organizations, associations of veterans of wars, clubs, societies, professional groups, foundations, labor unions, business associations, charitable

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

[9] Frederick Marryat, *A Diary in America,* Sydney Jackman, ed.(New York: Knopf, 1962), p. 309.

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organizations, and groups for the maintenance of standards. Almost any task that might conceivably warrant joint action was likely to become the basis for some organization and, what was most common, competing groups.

The Happy Consequences

What were the consequences to the society of leaving so much for voluntary groups to do? Economically, America entered the nineteenth century an "underdeveloped nation" and entered the twentieth century a great industrial nation. Most of this was certainly accomplished voluntarily, with a minimum of compulsion. In charity, there is some evidence that there was more giving to the poor than was thought at the time to be good for them. At any rate, associations proliferated. One writer says, "The principle of voluntary association accorded so well with American political and economic theories that as early as 1820 the larger cities had an embarrassment of benevolent organizations."[10]

During the Civil War there was apparently an over-abundance of relief to dependents, expended both by voluntary associations and governments. "Measured by money expended, the largest charitable efforts. North and South, were devoted to relieving families of service men. Oft-repeated warnings of the dangers of unwise giving were forgotten for the moment as community and statewide relief organizations solicited contributions. . . ."[11] It might not be accurate to say that no one suffered deprivation undeservedly, though such suffering must have been rare in America. It should be pointed out, too, that governments never entirely abandoned giving some form of relief, but this was usually small during the century.

There can be little doubt that religion flourished after it assumed a voluntary status. New denominations were born; revivals swept whole areas; religion took on a vitality it had not had in America for a long time, if ever. Even a critic of disestablishment had this to say: "I believe that in no other country is there more zeal shown by its various ministers, zeal even to the sacrifice of life; that no country sends out more zealous missionaries; that no country has more societies for the diffusion of the gospel; and that in no other country in the world are larger sums subscribed for the furtherance of those praiseworthy objects as in the eastern states of America."[12]

[10] Bremner, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[12] Marryat, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

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Educational Opportunity

Education flourished under voluntary auspices also. Sunday schools were begun initially to instruct those in the rudiments of learning who could not get it elsewhere. But the Sunday school soon restricted itself to religious teaching. Private, voluntary, and philanthropic schools were numerous, however. Parochial schools provided education for many. "Provision of schools for poor children without religious affiliations became a favorite charity for public-spirited citizens."[13] The Lancasterian method was imported from England and used to provide the rudiments of learning to many very inexpensively. Of colleges, there was a veritable glut. Over seven hundred passed out of existence before 1860. Why? The reasons are no doubt numerous and complex, but they apparently had little to do with unavailability or inexpensiveness. Francis Wayland of Brown observed, in 1850: "We have produced an article for which the demand is diminishing. We sell it at less than cost, and the deficiency is made up by charity. We give it away, and still the demand diminishes."[14]

There was foreign aid in the nineteenth century, too, though in a somewhat different form than that to which we have become accustomed. The Greeks received aid in the 1820's, relief garnered by the activities of voluntary committees. In the same period, many Greek war orphans were brought here for adoption. "In the autumn of 1832, when the starving people of Cape Verde Islands rowed out to a ship hoping to buy food, they were astonished to learn that the vessel had been sent from the United States for the express purpose of relieving their necessities. Individuals and churches in New England, Philadelphia, and New York had heard of their need and had raised thousands of dollars for their assistance."[15] It should be pointed out that Americans were beneficiaries of "foreign aid" from Europe. But it was not from governments. It came from private investors who put money in many American undertakings in the hope of profit. It might be well to point out that they were justified in doing so, for property was secure, and contracts were generally respected in nineteenth century America.

Much is missing from my account of American achievements by voluntary arrangements. No mention has been made of the bountiful sums given by philan-

[13] Blake, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

[14] Quoted in Rudolph, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

[15] Bremner, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

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thropists such as John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie, of the support of research, of colleges, of libraries, of medical work, of musical programs, and of churches. No record exists of many humbler but nonetheless important stories of voluntary activities, of farmers spared some deprivation by a collection made up by their neighbors, of the tending of the sick by thoughtful members of the community, of the adoption of children by relatives, and, above all, of those many honest individuals who suffered somewhat on occasion rather than to yield up their self-respect which they valued more than ease of circumstance.

Defenders of Voluntarism

But enough has been told, surely, to indicate that the voluntary way was very much a part of the American tradition. It was a tradition that fitted into a way of life, a way of life which embodied individual independence, responsibility, morality, as well as social concern, activity, and family and community respect. This way of life approved both generosity and gratitude. There were those who knew how to defend it in the nineteenth century. For example, President Pierce vetoed a bill in 1854 which would have provided federal aid for the care of the insane. He had this, among other things, to say:

> I readily, and I trust feelingly, acknowledge the duty incumbent on us all, as men and citizens, and as among the highest and holiest of our duties, to provide for those who, in the mysterious order of Providence, are subject to want and to disease of body or mind, but I cannot find any authority in the Constitution for making the Federal Government the great almoner of public charity throughout the United States. . . . It would, in the end, be prejudicial rather than beneficial to the noble offices of charity. . . .[16]

Or note the horror with which Daniel Webster described a proposal to draft an army in 1814. "That measures of this nature should be debated at all, in the councils of a free government is cause of dismay. The question is nothing less than whether the most essential rights of personal liberty shall be surrendered and despotism embraced in its worst form."[17]

Opposing the creation of a national university supported by the taxpayers, President Eliot of Harvard, speaking in 1873, declared that "our ancestors well

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[16] Pumphrey and Pumphrey, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

[17] Merle Curti, *et. al.*, eds., *American Issues* (New York: Lippincott, 1960, 4th edition), p. 151.

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understood the principle that to make a people free and self-reliant, it is necessary to let them take care of themselves, even if they do not take quite as good care of themselves as some superior power might."[18]

Much of the heritage of voluntarism has come down to the present day. Many colleges and universities are still aided by individual bequests, foundations, alumni, and friends. Community Chests are still assembled from private giving. Voluntary associations, fraternal organizations, and groups for various purposes still abound. But this should not disguise from us the massive departures from the tradition of voluntarism that have occurred in this century. More and more activities which were formerly left to voluntary effort are prescribed, compelled, and done by governments. It has reached the point that President Kennedy may circle a "disaster area" in a helicopter before the Red Cross arrives. I do not exaggerate. In the midst of a recent natural catastrophe, the newscaster announced that the President was in touch with developments and stood ready to offer aid.

There is not space here to detail the story of the decline of voluntarism and the growth of compulsion in America. Its outlines can only be suggested. Reformers abounded in the 1830's and 1840's, some of whom wanted to use government to effect for everyone what they desired for society. Such efforts resulted in the beginning of public (tax) supported education in several states in the 1820's and 1830's, and in the adoption of the first compulsory attendance law in 1852. Some reform ideas were advanced at first on a voluntary basis, such as temperance (or total abstinence), but were turned into lobby organizations to get government action. Labor unions tended to use coercion and violence from the outset, but courts in the nineteenth century usually denied them this as a "right." However, in the twentieth century, they received government protection and exemptions.

The Decline of Freedom

By the late nineteenth century, more than reformers and their enthusiasms was involved in the shift from voluntary to compulsory methods. Various collectivist ideologies were gaining adherents, and many intellectuals fell under the sway of these new ideas. Hence, as conditions changed in America, thinkers and publicists were precommitted to government rather than volun-

[18] Quoted in Rudolph, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

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tary solutions, leaving the tradition unsupported and undeveloped. State governments assumed more and more responsibilities: providing "free" schools, public sanitariums, building roads and highways, providing relief, and regulating and controlling economic endeavors.

Government Aid — and Control

The thrust was for ever larger governmental units to take over the responsibility of providing services and the task of regulating the endeavors of the citizenry. Thus, we have federal aid to education (already, though to a limited extent), federal aid to highways, federal aid to housing, and the federal government engaged in various economic undertakings. Indeed, more and more "voluntary" undertakings are interpenetrated by government aid and exemptions. The federal government is well installed in many universities today by way of the support of various research projects and the provision of scholarships. In a negative way, government interpenetrates most charitable and religious gifts by allowing them to be tax exempt.

The full extent of the compulsion that follows upon this expanded governmental activity emerges only gradually. By executive decrees, by legislation, and by court decisions, it begins to appear that if government has so much as granted a license for an undertaking this may be used to justify regulations. This is the principle (or lack of principle) which is emerging from the current racial disturbance. How long it will take the courts to decide that any undertaking has a "public" character which has benefited from tax exempt funds is anybody's guess. The handwriting is on the wall, however.

There are activities appropriate to government and to which it is essential. There are other endeavors which could be left to individuals and voluntary groups. The historical record of those who settled in English America and formed these United States suggests that voluntarism *could* be utilized to take care of most matters. Records, old and new, point up the fact that if liberty is to prevail, voluntarism *must* be used to do so. We may know that it is a part of the American tradition that Americans *should* rely upon voluntarism as the method for accomplishing most of their common tasks. ◈

• *The next article in this series will treat "Of Free Economic Intercourse"*

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AGGRESSION IS ALWAYS WRONG

CRAIG HOWELL

WHEN a peaceful person condemns all aggressive wars by one country against another, he is understood and applauded by the overwhelming majority of the American people. Yet when the same peaceful person condemns all aggressive actions by the state against its own citizens, he is misunderstood and repudiated by almost all of his fellow citizens.

The "welfare statist" invariably condemns the leaders of any nation who declare war against a small and peaceful neighbor. The same "welfare statist" always voices approval when his own leaders use force at home to despoil some for the alleged benefit of others.

In reality, the conventional rationalizations of the socialists would, if consistently applied, also justify most wars of aggression by one country against another. The libertarian, however, is against the use of aggressive force at home for exactly the same reason he is against it abroad – that is, his fundamental tenet is that no person has a moral right to initiate coercive action against another person. The libertarian is convinced that no person has any moral or legitimate right to advocate or use force except to defend himself against domestic and foreign aggressors who try to deprive him of his life, liberty, and property.

The conventional "liberal," however, has no basic philosophy on the use of force. For example, examine the various plans he espouses – social security, unemployment compensation, minimum wages, compulsory unionism, subsidies to farmers, price controls, and a hundred similar schemes. Without exception, all are based on the principle of using force against peaceful persons to make them conform to the wishes of others. The primary justification advanced by the welfare statist is that these schemes are *popular;*

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therefore, they must also be morally good. But is such a conclusion warranted? Does the popularity of an action affect its morality?

Now suppose that we applied this criterion to the morality of an aggressive war. Let us say that the people in nation X overwhelmingly desire an attack on country Y — not a rare occurrence in world history. If our "liberals" would be consistent with themselves, they would have to say that the attack, being popular, would also be right. But, naturally, they would say no such thing; they would vigorously denounce such a war, thus admitting that morality is not to be determined by public opinion polls.

A variation of the foregoing theme is the welfare statist assertion that if a given proposal has been duly legalized, then its ethical merits are no longer open to question. So, let us assume that the Parliament and President of nation X have legally authorized war on country Y. Does this meet their moral standards; or will the "liberals" again have to revise their proposition and admit that legality cannot determine morality?

A Double Standard

Reference to the just and unjust causes of war can be particularly valuable when we try to expose the fallacy in what is perhaps the "liberals' " most persuasive contention: that the programs of the welfare state aim to help those who are really in need of great help. They usually do not deny that the "social gains" they are seeking are atttainable only if the money of some is forcibly seized and granted to others. They do deny that any impropriety is involved in the process; on the contrary, they proudly announce, the welfare state merely enforces the undoubted axiom that one man's need has precedence over another man's luxury. "How noble and upstanding!" exclaim many. But the danger of this principle becomes quite clear if it is utilized to judge the rightness or wrongness of an aggressive war. A single, concrete example from recent history can illustrate.

In the 1930's Japan was certainly in an unenviable spot. There was not nearly enough room or land to support its booming population. It lacked many crucial raw materials. Both industry and agriculture were comparatively backward. Able technicians and skilled workmen were still scarce. If ever a country was in desperate economic need, Japan was. Yet, very few people have gone so far as to maintain that its need fully

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and morally justified its chosen solution to its problems – aggressive military imperialism. And if Japan's wants gave it no right to the land or property of other nations, then whose wants would? The inevitable answer is: nobody's. This holds true not only for underprivileged countries but also for underprivileged persons. If we really want to help them, as we should, we can contribute to various local, national, and international charities. The essential point remains, however; no one has a right to something he has not earned.

Warlike Measures at Home

At this juncture, let us consider exactly when "liberal" lovers of peace would approve of a declaration of war. We see that their standard of a just war is virtually identical to the libertarian standard of the just use of any kind of force. Only *defensive* wars and *defensive* force meet with the approbation of true workers for liberty and peace in the world. Our basic rights come from God himself. So long as we do not use our rights to violate the equal rights of our neighbors, we may exercise our free will as we see fit.

"Liberals" suffer a myopia, an inability to see that aggressive force is used to build the welfare state. True, there is considerably less outright violence in tax collections for interventionism than in full-scale war. Big Government relies much more on the *threat* of force, rather than on its actual employment, to promote the payment of taxes. But anyone could easily witness the transformation of potential energy into kinetic energy – the threat into the reality – by trying to spend for himself the portion of his taxes which would go for, say, farm subsidies. Not surprisingly, few citizens have made this interesting experiment.

Returning to our basic comparison, we can now say this: the notion that coercive action is a legitimate means to attain some desired goal underlies both the welfare state and the war of aggression. The fact that force is merely threatened to attain that goal does not make it any better. A country that makes unfair demands for money or land from another country is not to be commended if it obtains what it wants by threats instead of by brute strength. Intimidation may be more veiled than outright aggression; ethically, however, there is no substantial difference between the two. Most Americans do not hesitate to condemn both methods, at least, as instruments of foreign policy.

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Then why do we not all condemn them as instruments of domestic policy, too? There is no reason why our attitude toward aggression abroad should differ from our attitude toward coercion in our own homeland. The same principles make us realize that compromise with either practice is a moral impossibility, because of their intrinsic evil. If all upstanding citizens regard themselves as perfectly justified when they stoutly refuse to excuse any and all wars of aggression, then no one may logically assail as "wild-eyed extremists" those lovers of liberty who do not approve of any act of coercion to support the welfare state. If all righteous people accept the worth of the Ten Commandments, then no one may logically denounce as "radical rightists" those who do not tolerate wholesale violation of the one that reads, "Thou shalt not steal." There is no escaping the fact that aggression is always wrong, at home as well as abroad. ◈

CALAMITY!

A State Department Master Mind
(Rightly or wrongly, as you will)
Avers it is not hard to find
High level Commies in Brazil.

And thereupon – O direful threat,
The worst that has been uttered yet! –
Brazil, all hot beneath the collar,
Administers a crushing blow:
Unless we say it isn't so
She won't accept another dollar!

And *that's* a switch! For heretofore
The nation that reviled us worst
Was apt to get a little more
Than other states – and get it first.

RALPH BRADFORD

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America's Unique Happy-Ending Revolution

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

UNLIKE Hollywood films, big revolutions rarely have happy endings. The victory of the parliamentary forces over the royalists in England in the seventeenth century was pretty mild, by the standards of some later upheavals; there was no indiscriminate massacre of the defeated, no wholesale spoliation of one class by another. But many Englishmen who opposed Charles II must have felt a sense of frustration and disillusionment when they saw Cromwell, backed by his soldiers, driving out what remained of the Parliament that had begun the struggle and substituting for excesses of the royal prerogative the naked power of the sword.

Frustration and disillusionment also marked the course of the French Revolution, after it had begun in an atmosphere of professions of brotherhood and wordy manifestoes. The merciless guillotine, first used against aristocrats and their suspected sympathizers, was turned by the Jacobins against the Girondists, then by the more moderate Jacobins, in self-defense, against Robespierre and his associates in revolutionary dictatorship. The wheel came full circle when the glittering adventure of Napoleon's Empire crashed in military defeat and the Bourbons, shorn, to be sure, of much of their former power, returned.

Frustration and disillusionment in the Russian Revolution were on a still grander scale. Taine's bitter image of revolutionary France, "the crocodile devouring its young," was still truer for Soviet Russia. The phase of slaughtering

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many of the old revolutionaries came more slowly in Russia than in France; but it was still more sweeping and thorough when it did come.

One need only call the roll of the Founding Fathers of Soviet communism, the seven men who constituted the Politbureau of the Communist Party at the time of Lenin's death: Stalin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. By 1940 this roll consisted of one all-powerful dictator, Stalin, and six obituary notices. Zinoviev and Kamenev, Rykov, and Bukharin were all shot after show trials conducted with much patently false evidence. Tomsky killed himself rather than go through with such a trial; and Trotsky, barricaded and guarded as he was in his Mexican refuge, did not escape the murderous blow of one of Stalin's numerous professional assassins.

Sharp Contrast

What a contrast to these repeated scenes of bloodstained tyranny was the peaceful aftermath of the American Revolution! Of three revolutions that profoundly moved the minds and hearts of men – the American, the French, the Russian – the American remained by far the most loyal to its ideals. There were no tumbrils dragging new batches of victims to the guillotine; there was no tragic figure of a revolutionary Mme. Roland crying: "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name." There were no factional splits, no fierce power grabs among the men who led the American Revolution to victory.

Where there were differences of opinion and emphasis among the Founding Fathers, as in the case of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, these were often bridged over in an atmosphere of abiding mutual respect and friendship. By a curious coincidence Jefferson and Adams, after carrying on a long correspondence, died on the same day, July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, of which Jefferson was the author and Adams the vindicator in many political writings. Americans may feel justified pride in their patriotic heritage when they set against the fustian declamations of demagogic dictators of our own and earlier times the mixture of humility and dignity with which George Washington ended his historic Farewell Message:

> Though in reviewing the incidents of my Administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently be-

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seech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence, and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love toward it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government – the ever-favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

Why was it that Washington was no Cromwell, setting himself up as a military dictator after leading to victory in a war against tyranny, and that the young American Republic did not experience the fratricidal slaughter of its revolutionary leaders by each others' hands and the changes in ideals that marked the aftermaths of the French and Russian upheavals? Many reasons may be cited. But surely one of the most important was that the American Revolution set for itself realistic, non-utopian goals, did not set class against class, and did not make promises which were out of line with human nature and human capacity.

From Utopia to Terror

In France and in Russia there was the same fateful pattern of the utopian dream turning into a nightmare of terrorism. As Burke shows so vividly in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* the ideologues of the French Revolution placed an exaggerated estimate on what unassisted reason could accomplish in setting up a new political and social order. They believed in the regeneration of man and society through the proclamation and attempted implementation of doctrinaire ideas.

When the results of the experiment were, in many ways, unsuccessful, the idea could not be tolerated that the ideas themselves might be open to criticism. The fault must lie with wicked, malicious, hostile individuals; and the guillotine began to work at full capacity to eliminate these individuals. The Jacobins of the French Revolution—who had much in common, psychologically, with Soviet communists, even if they operated in an earlier phase of industrial development – relied on

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the Paris mob for their political support; one of their leaders, St. Just, declared: "Les malheureux sont la puissance de la terre" ("The unfortunate are the power of the earth.") Over a century later the Soviet Bolsheviks, or Communists, advanced this idea with all the trappings of Marxism and justified all their actions of violence, cruelty, and dictatorship with the excuse that they were acting as champions of the oppressed and exploited proletariat.

The inevitable development of a revolution that sets out with this appeal to mass poverty into terrorist methods of government – which, in turn, destroy the more generous ideals of the revolutionary impulse – is well conveyed in the following passage in Hannah Arendt's recently published erudite and perceptive work, *On Revolution*:

> No revolution has ever solved the "social question" and liberated men from the predicament of want, but all revolutions, with the exception of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, have followed the example of the French Revolution and used and misused the mighty forces of misery and destitution in their struggle against tyranny or oppression. And, although the whole record of past revolutions demonstrates beyond doubt that every attempt to solve the social problem with political means leads into terror, and that it is terror which sends revolutions to their doom, it can hardly be denied that to avoid this fatal mistake is almost impossible when a revolution breaks out under conditions of mass poverty.

No Glittering Promises

Among the big revolutions, the American was unique in two ways. It made no appeal to class hatred and class envy. And it made no glittering demagogic promises to cure all human ills by some overnight reconstruction of society. Reading through the basic documents of the American Revolution and the work of political construction which followed the successful elimination of British rule – the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, the Constitution – one finds no appeals to proscription, to hatred, to spoliation. One finds only a reasoned statement of the grievances which led Americans to the conviction that the connection with the British Crown must be severed and a spirited vindication of the inalienable rights of free men, under God and natural law.

In the same way, the Constitution is notably sparing of promises that the state will give the people who live under it this or that material benefit. On the other hand, it is full of guarantees against arbitrary abuses of

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governmental power. The underlying assumption is that a society of self-reliant individuals, protected against governmental dictation and regimentation, will find within itself the necessary combination of individual effort and cooperative resources to create roads and schools and all the other prerequisites of civilized living in what was then largely an undeveloped wilderness. And what impressed Alexis de Tocqueville and other observant Europeans who saw America in its early stage of development was the instinct and the capacity of Americans to dispense with state aid, to solve their problems on a basis of individual, voluntary, cooperative, and local energies. The result of this philosophy of government is described by Tocqueville as follows:

> If the opinion which the citizen entertains of himself is exaggerated, it is at least salutary; he unhesitatingly confides in his own powers, which appear to him to be all-sufficient. When a private individual meditates an undertaking, however directly it may be connected with the welfare of society, he never thinks of soliciting the co-operation of the government, but he publishes his plan, offers to execute it himself, courts the assistance of other individuals and struggles manfully against all obstacles. Undoubtedly he is often less successful than the state might have been in his position; but in the end the sum of these private undertakings far exceeds all that the government could have done.

Room for Failure

Whereas the French Jacobins and the Russian communists were fanatics, convinced that they were justified in resorting to the most ruthless measures in order to maintain the absolute power with which they believed they could bring a paradise on earth to their followers, the Founding Fathers of the American Republic were pre-eminently men of reason, convinced of their own fallibility and of the fallibility of those who would follow them.

Well versed in history and familiar with human nature as a result of their own active political careers, these men recognized as the gravest threat to the free institutions which they wished to establish on an enduring basis, excessive concentration of state power, regardless of who might possess this power or for what purposes it might be used. As Madison puts it in No. 47 of *The Federalist*:

> The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive and judicial, in the same hands, whether of one, a few or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed or elective, may

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justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny.

John Adams expressed this idea still more succinctly in his *Defense of the Constitution* when he wrote: "Power is always abused when unlimited and unbalanced."

Checks and Balances

Whereas the evolution in France under the Jacobins and in the Soviet Union under the communists was toward sheer absolutism, with no element of effective check and balance, the American Constitution provides for three independent, coequal branches of government, each entrusted with carefully defined functions, each forbidden to trespass on the spheres of the other two. Because of this strong belief that the best of men cannot be safely trusted with too much power, many assurances against abuses of administrative power, even when sanctioned by majority vote, are imbedded in the Constitution. John Adams, the most profound political thinker among the framers of the Constitution, envisaged the art of maintaining stable government under free institutions as the creation of an effective equilibrium, with one form of power checking another and excluding the possibility that government might develop into a monster, a "leviathan" – to use the term of the seventeenth century political scientist, Thomas Hobbes – that would so dominate and submerge its citizens as to mold them like robots for its purposes.

It is a modern fashion to demand a strong executive and an "affirmative state" that will do for the individual many of the things which were formerly left to his exertion and initiative. But it is significant that the Constitution, the quintessence of the ripe wisdom of the men who won American liberty and then gave liberty a framework of law and orderly self-government, devotes as much attention to telling the executive and legislative branches of government what they may not do as to specifying what they are supposed to do. It is interesting to run through the Constitution and see how often the words "No" and "Not" recur:

> Congress shall make *no* law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press. . . .
>
> The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall *not* be violated. . . .
>
> Excessive bail shall *not* be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted. . . .

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The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall *not* be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people. . . .

No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.

No capitation or other direct tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration hereinbefore directed to be taken.

The last of these emphatic "Nots" and "Nos" made it impossible to impose a graduated income tax until, in an evil hour, this grant to the government of an unlimited lien on all the earnings of its citizens was authorized by means of a constitutional amendment.

Stern restrictions on the power of governing authority is a noteworthy characteristic of the republic which grew out of the American Revolution. Another is a conspicuous absence of promises to make the individual wealthy, healthy, or wise by state action. One finds in America's Constitution no bribes, no handouts, no utopian promises.

And just because the Constitution offers a workable scheme of free government, not a blueprint for paradise on earth, it experienced a happy ending, free from the factional strife and terror and tyranny that always follow when far-reaching demagogic promises prove unrealizable. ◈

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

The Crisis of Social Security

IT HAS BEEN WELL SAID that, while we used to suffer from social evils, we now suffer from the remedies for them. The difference is that, while in former times the social evils were gradually disappearing with the growth of wealth, the remedies we have introduced are beginning to threaten the continuance of that growth of wealth on which all future improvement depends. . . . Though we may have speeded up a little the conquest of want, disease, ignorance, squalor, and idleness, we may in the future do worse even in that struggle when the chief dangers will come from inflation, paralyzing taxation, coercive labor unions, an ever increasing dominance of government in education, and a social service bureaucracy with far-reaching arbitrary powers — dangers from which the individual cannot escape by his own efforts and which the momentum of the overextended machinery of government is likely to increase rather than mitigate.

F. A. HAYEK, *The Constitution of Liberty*

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The Beetle and the Centipede

An Old Tale Retold . . . . . W. A. PATON

IN THE COOL of the evening, so the story goes, Mr. Beetle and Miss Centipede came out from under the rocks and started to do a bit of gossiping as was the practice among such creatures in the old days.

"Good evening, my dear Miss Centipede," said Mr. Beetle, in his best voice, and "Good evening to you, Mr. Beetle," the lady replied in sprightly fashion.

After some discussion of the weather, the food supply, and the hazards recently encountered, the conversation slowed down and in an effort to keep the visit going Mr. Beetle hit upon a new topic.

"Miss Centipede," he said, "the part of your anatomy that has intrigued me most for a long time – although I don't think I've mentioned it before – is your beautiful array of legs, and I'm also greatly impressed by the marvelous skill you display in manipulating them as you scurry about. I have only six legs to keep track of, but I don't move very briskly and am regarded as rather awkward by all my friends. You, on the other hand, with fifty legs on the windward and fifty more on the lee, handle all this equipment with no apparent difficulty, and travel with speed, and most gracefully, in any direction you choose to go, and change your course as you wish without the slightest hesitation. Tell me, my dear Miss Centipede, how in the world do you do it?"

On hearing this little speech Miss Centipede tossed her head and rolled her eyes coquettishly (the reader may need to use a little imagination right here), and replied:

"Good Mr. Beetle, you make far too much of something that is really quite simple. I get about smoothly and gracefully – I admit it, you see – because it is actually very easy for me to keep my legs

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in order and have them respond to my wishes."

Mr. Beetle was not satisfied. "It may seem easy to you," he said, "but your pedal apparatus looks very complicated to me, and I don't see how you can keep from getting tangled up – getting your wires crossed, so to speak – at least occasionally. I wish you'd tell me how you really go about it. Suppose, for example, that you want to move the sixteenth leg on your left side, just how do you issue the proper instructions to accomplish this?"

"There's nothing to it," she said jauntily; "I'll show you." Miss Centipede then tackled the prescribed chore. She twisted and squirmed, went through all sorts of contortions, got up quite a sweat in fact, and all without achieving the desired result. Finally, instead of moving the sixteenth leg on the left she managed a pitiful little twitch of the eleventh leg (counting from the front) on the right.

Mr. Beetle now realized that he had started something that should have been left alone, and as Miss Centipede continued her struggle he became genuinely alarmed.

"Please, Miss Centipede," he begged, "don't bother your pretty head any longer with my silly inquiry. The matter is of no consequence and I'm afraid you are making yourself ill. We can discuss this some other time."

But Miss Centipede had her back up and according to all the accounts of the episode she kept on trying desperately for an hour or so until she was completely exhausted. But this wasn't the worst of it. When she finally gave up she had become so confused that she couldn't move at all! One writer introduces a dab of verse in telling about this unhappy outcome, somewhat as follows according to my hazy recollection:

> She wrought herself to such a pitch
> She stretched out, helpless, in the ditch.

And the poor creature was permanently paralyzed thereafter, from all fifty waists down, and finally died of starvation.

This tale has a moral for these days – one that is fairly evident to anyone familiar with and concerned about the impact of the tide of government intervention upon the intricate mechanism of the free market. Among the wonders of human society – perhaps the greatest of them all – is our network of exchange activities and the accompanying mosaic of prices. It is this instrument which has fostered and implemented a truly astonishing degree of specialization in produc-

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tion, and has made available an almost countless array of consumer goods and services. Operating through the price structure, the market acknowledges and integrates the inclinations and choices of millions of individuals, and the system promptly reflects the constantly changing attitudes and circumstances of the host of participants. It is in this connection that the term "miracle" has often been applied to describe the functioning of the free competitive market. Without directives, without government intervention, without central planning, the impersonal forces of the market, acting *automatically,* direct the allocation of resources, appraise the contributions of the productive factors, and distribute the product. But this marvelous mechanism, not anyone's invention but the very essence of economic development and activity, can undoubtedly be crippled and finally wrecked altogether by conscious interference and tinkering. Left alone, with the power of the state confined to checking predatory actions, the market performs wonders in guiding economic conduct; loaded with price fixing, government regulation, bureaucratic intervention and planning, the market apparatus falters and eventually becomes ineffective. In his classes years ago Fred M. Taylor laid great stress on the need for a hands-off policy if the price system were to be effective in directing economic activity, and his favorite admonition in this connection was: "Don't monkey with the thermostat."

The bad results of present-day interference with the market are everywhere apparent, but there are few signs of any abatement of the socialist trend. The planners are twisting and squirming, like Miss Centipede, and each additional effort to control the economy sets up a chain of new contortions and dislocations. But the dedicated interventionists who are now in the saddle don't seem to be afraid of the stagnation and paralysis awaiting them — and the rest of us, unfortunately — at the end of the road. ◈

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

Stanley Yankus

I AM NOT A JOINER by nature; I prefer to stand alone. If I were asked to draw a picture of an organization, I would show two men — one of them speaking and holding his hand over the mouth of the other.

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RALPH BRADFORD

EDUCATION NOW and THEN

THE SCENE is a college chapel or auditorium. It is graduation day. The commencement address has been delivered and perfunctorily applauded. The time has come to present diplomas to the graduates. The Dean is poised, ready to call off their names alphabetically, thus summoning them to the stage to receive the coveted "sheepskin" and traditional Presidential handshake. Fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, uncles, cousins, and aunts of the graduates come awake from their commencement torpor. The big moment has arrived!

"Joseph Adams!" The Dean's voice is sharp and clear, and young Mr. Adams steps briskly forward. As he reaches the dais, his hand already half outstretched, he hears the President speaking:

"Mr. Adams, you have successfully completed the required academic courses of study, and we are preparing to award you the Master of Arts degree, with all the rights, privileges, and immunities, as well as the obligations and responsibilities, thereunto appertaining."

So far so good. The President has uttered that ancient formula hundreds, perhaps thousands, of times before. Young Mr. Adams has heard those words at previous graduation exercises that he has attended. But now the President seems to go off on a tangent.

"Only one step remains to be taken," he says. "It is now time for the performance of your Public Act."

Young Mr. Adams looks star-

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tled. What is this? Has something been added? Something unusual? Nothing like this was ever in the routine as he has heard it in the past. Has Prexy gone off his nut or something? What does he mean – "public act"?

But the grave voice of the President goes on: "I will state the beginning of the determination or initial proof of the thesis, and you may then take up the argument."

Mr. Adams blinks. Thesis? Argument? What the heck? . . . . But the President goes into a kind of sing-song recital. *"Mentire quacunque de causa ignobile et sua Natura pravum esse; res ipse clamat, et ferme ab omnibus praecipue Virtutem colentibus conceditur. Quod si omnino fas esse possit. Deus comprobat; et si ille possit probare, non est necessario verax. . . ."*

Joe Adams recognizes, of course, that the Old Man is spouting Latin. After all, Joe has studied the language of Caesar – in fact, he has followed old Julius all over Europe by reading his Commentaries. But that was years ago – high school stuff. What's Prexy up to? The Old Man is noted for a puckish humor, but this is carrying things pretty far!

"Now, Mr. Adams," the President continues, oblivious to Joe's confusion, "you may take it from there. This, as you know, will be the final step in earning your Master's degree. You will, of course, have recognized the thesis which I have propounded. It is Number Ten in the Rubric of Ethics on today's calendar of disputations. This calendar, I may add, has according to custom been printed and distributed to the other candidates for graduation, and to all members of the audience."

Dazed, Joe Adams looks out over the crowd, and sees that each of the several hundred persons present now holds in his hand a large sheet of paper nearly two feet square. While he is still trying to grasp what all this means, the President thrusts a similar broadside into his hands.

"You have not seen this before, Joseph, because it would not be fair to you or the other candidates to have prior notice of the theses to be propounded. But you may now take a moment to look it over."

Joe's bewildered glance encounters a closely printed page, headed VIRIS PREACELLENTISSIMIS, and then trailing down into what seems to be a list of the faculty, expressed in Latin. Below all that, he identifies a number of headings, each with several appended sentences or statements. The headings are: *Theses*

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Grammaticae, Theses Rhetoricae, Theses Logicae – and a number of others. One especially thrusts itself out at him, because of its several subheads. It is *Theses Metaphysicae,* and the subheads are *De ente in genera, de Deo,* and *de mente humana.*

Joe looks up helplessly, but gets no aid or comfort from the President, who acts as though there were nothing at all unusual about these extraordinary proceedings, and goes calmly on with his instructions.

"I repeat," he says, "you will find the subject of your disputation as Number Ten under *Theses Ethicae.* For the benefit of any in the audience who may not know Latin – or who," he added dryly, "have forgotten what they once learned, I will translate the substance of the thesis propounded. It reads as follows:

" 'To lie for any reason whatever is ignoble and vicious by its very nature. The thing itself cries out and is conceded by practically all who cultivate virtue.' "

The President looks at Joe expectantly through the top lenses of his bifocals. "Very well now, Joseph, you may proceed to defend this thesis. Or if you prefer, you may attack it. When you have finished, other members of the class – and indeed, members of the audience, if they choose – may dispute your conclusions. If so, you must then defend your position. All this, I need hardly add, is to be in oral Latin."

Young Mr. Adams looks about wildly. The other graduates are equally bewildered. The audience is stunned and a little embarrassed. Clearly the old President, long esteemed in the community, has suddenly gone off his rocker!

A Standard Practice

A preposterous episode? Yes, indeed – one that is not likely to happen on any American campus this year or next. But suppose it *did* happen. How many of the graduates do you think would be able to execute the proposed disputations?

Yet this was standard routine in the education of our not-so-remote forefathers. If you will change the name of Joe to John and the year to 1743, you will find a certain young Mr. Adams getting his M. A. from Harvard; and without question he was required to master such disputations, because the practice was still followed at Harvard as much as a hundred years thereafter.[1]

[1] For detailed reproductions of the printed "Theses" actually used in Colonial American colleges the reader is referred to *Education of the Founding Fathers of the Republic* by James J. Walsh, M.D., Ph.D., Sc.D., E.D., etc., Fordham University Press, 1935.

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The same thing was no doubt true of another Adams named Samuel, who got his Master's from the same school the same year. John Hancock, while not so well educated as the Adams cousins, won an A. B. from the same school, and it is almost certain that he, too, had to meet the test of the "Public Act."

What was true of Harvard was equally true of other colonial colleges, such as William and Mary, which produced a Thomas Jefferson; Princeton, which gave a B. A. to Dr. Benjamin Rush (later called "the Hippocrates of Pennsylvania"); Yale, which graduated Oliver Wolcott; the College of Philadelphia, whose B. A. was held by William Paca. (All these men here mentioned, incidentally, were signers of the Declaration of Independence).

Emphasis was on Latin, but by no means to the exclusion of other studies. Latin was looked upon, very properly, as the key to much other learning; moreover, it was an accomplishment – a fundamental embellishment and hallmark of culture and cultivation. But students were also well versed in the more "practical" things – arithmetic, algebra, geometry, physics; and in grammar, rhetoric, and logic. Ethics, too, or moral philosophy, was part of the course they must run. But language was deemed essential. Before entering college at all, the colonial student was expected to have had four or five years in a preparatory school. And *what* preparation! They were expected to *talk* in Latin before they even entered college; and thereafter some of their classes (including mathematics!) were conducted in that language. Greek, too, and Hebrew, were also much studied.

The Reverend Cotton Mather set forth the requirements for admission to Harvard thus: "When scholars had so far profited at the grammar school that they could read any classical author into English, and readily make and speak true Latin and write it in verse as well as prose, and perfectly decline the paradigms of nouns and verbs in the Greek tongue, they were judged capable of admission."

Similar requirements are listed in *New England's First Fruits*. This was a little book printed largely for circulation in England. It was designed primarily to persuade people to help the colonists with benefactions for their public efforts, and to encourage emigration – what we would now call a promotion piece. It laid great stress on education, and a description is given of a graduation exercise. The students, it says, must have "kept their Public Acts in

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former years" – that is, they must have carried on public disputations in extemporaneous Latin even in their undergraduate days; and it says they must also have performed two exercises during the graduation procedures, which exercises "were Latine and Greek orations and declamations, and Hebrew Analysis, grammatical, logical, and rhetorical, of the Psalms."

Legacy from Scholasticism

All this was the eighteenth century legacy from the Scholastic method of education, which began in the universities of Medieval Europe and which, modified and adapted, was generally practiced in American colleges and universities well into the early decades of the nineteenth century. The key word here, of course, is "method." It is not asserted that colonial education was Scholastic. By colonial times Scholasticism as such was long since dead; but one of its principal mechanisms – the so-called Public Act or extempore disputation in Latin – contributed importantly to the making of the colonial elite.

Scholasticism, much and properly condemned during the great times of the Renaissance, and today one with Nineveh and Tyre, was nevertheless a great stepping stone in man's long search for knowledge. Involving as it did a broad acquaintance with language, literature, philosophy, mathematics, physics, history, ethics – both the "humanities" and the principles of science as far as they had been apprehended – Scholasticism was the foundation of education as originally laid down by Anicius Manlius Boethius in the sixth century, when he established the so-called "quadrivium" of studies in arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. Later the "trivium" was added – grammar, logic, and rhetoric – to round out "The Seven Liberal Arts."

This concept, long dormant after the death of Boethius, was revived in the eighth century by Charlemagne, who tried to attract the best scholars to his court, and decreed the establishment of schools of higher learning in every part of the realm he was hammering into an empire. Its evolution was again stimulated and broadened by the writings of Johannes Scotus Erigena in the ninth century, and by the works of St. Anselm and of Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth.

It was, of course, a tortuous maze of abstruse ontological reasoning, with endless disputation about the relative claims of philosophy and theology. "The principal object of the medieval study of philosophy," writes Rev. Fr.

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James J. Walsh, "was to furnish students with a scientific basis for the Christian faith that all were presumed to have." This was true for several centuries.

There was also infinite hair-splitting in the effort to bring all new learning into harmony with the pronouncements of Aristotle, who dominated philosophy for over a thousand years, even as Ptolemy cast his long shadow over geography, and Galen towered over medicine. But through it all, men were striving for mental growth and for the emancipation of reason. This was completed, or at any rate insured, finally, by the brilliant sunburst of the Renaissance.

With that glowing period of liberation, the older Scholasticism came to an end by having its aims appropriated and largely realized. But the methods, what we may call the machinery, of the Scholastics was carried over. Despite the obloquy and scorn heaped upon the old Schoolmen by the titans of the Renaissance, these methods became a useful if not a vital tool in the development of the New Learning; and as a result the Latin disputations we have noted helped form the minds and extend the knowledge of scholars in all parts of the Western world. Transplanted finally to the developing culture of a new continent, they were vastly important in setting the mental and spiritual patterns, and determining the economic and political philosophies, of our own colonial ancestors.

The Reason for It

But method aside, what were they *taught*, those grandfathers of our grandfathers? To explain the pattern of their lives, their willingness to make sacrifices, to suffer, – in the case of fifty-five, to sign their names to a document which, had the Revolution failed, might very well have led to their execution as traitors – to explain such attitudes it is not enough to say that they were equipped to belabor a Latin syllogism on Commencement day. That kind of logic can be sterile and meaningless. The men who wrote the Virginia Bill of Rights and the various other expressions of liberty that preceded the Declaration of Independence, as well as the Signers themselves, had been nurtured on something much more substantial than theologic or philosophic disputation. As debaters with a competitive flair they no doubt justified the employment of a sophistry to score a point; but when the cards were down they were grounded in convictions that were supported by something far more fundamental.

They studied such day-to-day

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practical things as arithmetic, algebra, and geometry; such horizon-pushers as astronomy; such mind-trainers as logic; such vision-stretchers as philosophy; such conduct-governors as ethics; such stimulators as theology; such broadeners as science; such deepeners as religion; such stabilizers as history; such illuminators as literature. And in all this they were seeking knowledge for its own sake – but also for the practical use they could make of it. Thus under the *Thesis Physicae* in one college we find them debating the qualities of air and of gasses, the properties of what they called "the electric spark," the effect of light on vegetation – and the use of gypsum as a fertilizer!

The Mathematics of Evil

Under metaphysics they discussed the properties of spirit and of matter, questioned whether matter can think, and asserted that the existence of spirit is much more probable than the existence of matter! When it came to the *theses mathematicae*, they disputed on such propositions as that mathematical entities are immutable, or that whatever consists of parts cannot be infinite, or that the possibility of a thing is deduced from the nonrepugnance of the idea of it; and especially (a strange thing to be considered mathematically) that moral evil does not take away the perfection of the world.

The *theses ethicae* afforded a broad field for speculation as well as for sententious assertion. A favorite proposition seems to have been that human society cannot exist without the observance of truth. Another was that the faculty of distinguishing good from evil is essential to a moral agent. Still another was the stricture upon lying which was used in the fictional episode with which we began this article. And there was a wry humor evident in the thesis that "in all men there is present a moral sense of eternal obligation, *as is plainly seen from the judgments which men make with regard to the actions of others*"! (Italics added)

Philosophy, of course, was a sphere of endless speculation—and of boundless learning. The godlike authority of Aristotle had long since been deposed. No longer did men deny the validity of an assumption merely because it was contrary to something "The Philosopher" had said 300 years before Christ. But he was still studied, as was Plato, Lucretius, the Stoics, and the more recent pundits like Moore, Hobbes, and Locke. To attempt here an enumeration of their philosophical studies

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would simply result in a catalogue of the philosophers.[2] Perhaps it will be enough to mention what to me is another amusing note sounded by President Johnson of King's College – a note that applies to much of today's polemic: *"The thing is taken for granted which has to be proved"*!

Preparation for Living

Were they, then, "better educated" than today's youth? It is not the purpose of these paragraphs to make that contention.

After all, what is education? One dictionary definition says that it is the act or process of training by a prescribed or customary course of study or discipline. Another, and better, defines education as "the totality of the qualities acquired through individual instruction and social training, which further the happiness, efficiency, and capacity for social service of the educated." Herbert Spencer broadened it still more when he wrote: "To prepare us for complete living is the function which education has to discharge."

Complete living! That's where languages and the liberal arts generally come in. And perhaps the *duration* of the educational process – its lifelong character in the true seeker of knowledge – was best expressed by G. J. Whyte-Melville when he said: "Education should be as gradual as the moonrise, perceptible not in progress but in result."

Education and its meaning are relative – to persons and to times. Today's knowledge (as distinct from today's wisdom) is vastly superior to that of the eighteenth century. When John Adams got his M.A. from Harvard such a simple but important matter as the identification of oxygen by Joseph Priestly was still some 40 years in the future. It would be 18 years before James Watt began to tinker with Newcomen's "atmospheric" engine, and the first crude locomotive would not be built for over eight decades. Medical science was still groping. George Washington was heavily pockmarked (Gilbert Stuart's suave brush to the contrary notwithstanding) because it would be 40 years before Jenner demonstrated vaccine. Laennec would not invent the stethoscope for 75 years, and it would be 152 years before Röntgen came along with the X ray.

Things undreamed of by young John Adams (or by old John Adams, for that matter, since he lived

[2] For an exhaustive study of the writings that occupied their attention and helped form their minds, see *Intellectual Origins of American National Thought*, subtitled "Pages from Books Our Founding Fathers Read," edited by Wilson Ober Clough, Corinth Press, N. Y.

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past ninety) are now part of everyday living. Today's youth starts out with a knowledge of things in existence that would have represented a baffling mystery to John Adams and his contemporaries. There is a very great difference between the *amount* of education possible then and now. Quantitatively, there is simply no comparison. But *qualitatively?* Are today's young people being as well armed to confront the problems of the twentieth century as the Adams generation was to meet those of the eighteenth?

Greater earning power, broader professional and technical skills? Certainly. But today's problems are not limited just to making a living and achieving success, however important both may be. The real problems are in the realm of judgment and decision. The test of education is in whether it contributes to the ability of making moral choices. Such choices do not arise wholly in the area of personal ethics, but in the field of political, economic, and social policy.

The Trappings of Education Leave Much To Be Desired

Much has been made, these recent decades, of education. It has been held up as a kind of national insurance policy. A dozen years ago we were assured that it was our best defense against Communism. Six years ago when Russia surprised the world with the first Sputnik, the clamor for education again climbed to crescendo in a new key: the great need was for *scientific* education! Today the chorus continues, but with a new emphasis. The demand now is for more classrooms, more buildings, more laboratories, more gymnasiums, more assembly halls, more audio-visual equipment.

Everybody, it seems, is a vocal exponent of the outward paraphernalia of education, measured in terms of what it will cost in millions and billions. But few among such advocates seem to bother considering what education is, what kind of education we are currently getting, and what kind we need. It is symbolic, perhaps, that the talk is nearly all of quantity, very little of quality. In this we follow the current pattern of measuring everything, not in terms of what it is, but in terms of how much we spend to get it.

Young John Adams and his contemporaries had been schooled in the morals of "natural philosophy."[3] Nobody had taught them that the world owed them a

[3] For a description of his reading habits and preferences, see *The Adams Family* by James Truslow Adams, 1930.

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living, or that they were "entitled" to certain physical bonuses and benefits from their government. They were not concerned with personal privilege and prerogative, but with freedom. From their grounding in the philosophy of liberty, they had reached certain conclusions about the rights of man and the relationship which a man should have to a government of his own creation. When the hour struck, they were able to state those convictions simply, clearly, and unequivocally. "We hold these truths to be self-evident" . . . . and so on through the measured pronouncements of the Declaration. That document was by no means just a Jeffersonian exercise in rhetoric. He himself said in later years that he had not tried to be original, but had simply sought to express what he knew were the beliefs of his associates in the Congress.

Could Modern Teaching Yield a Declaration of Independence?

With no disposition to question either the integrity or the courage of today's young Americans, I think we may fairly wonder whether such a document could be produced in this country now. Put it this way: If Jefferson and Adams and Franklin and the others on the drafting committee and in the Congress had been taught to believe that there is something inherently wrong with an affluent society; if they had been assured that an economy managed by a self-anointed elite was the safe and ideal climate for security; if they had been brought up in the doctrine that huge and permanent public debt is not only not an evil but a positive good; and if all this had been buttressed by the assurance that it was the obligation of government to furnish them employment, see that they got good wages, subsidize their enterprises, guarantee them against loss, insure them in case of illness, underwrite the price of their produce, pay them for not producing at all, – if this had been their background, do you think they would ever have created on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty? Would they have pledged to that new nation their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor – or would they have demanded first that it agree to indemnify them against any loss or inconvenience they might sustain in the hazardous adventure of the Revolution? ◈

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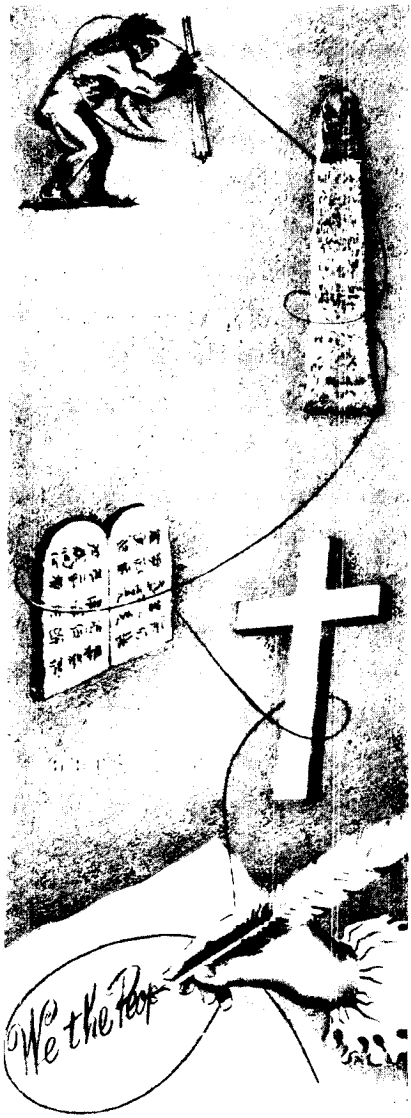

ALL MEN desire to be free. It would be a mistake to suppose that the leftist loves freedom less than the conservative. Some men's struggle for freedom, however, causes suffering and death while yet others come among their brothers as a healing balm. Why such opposite effects from the identical basic urge?

Freedom, in human terms, has to do with two attributes: the capacity for choice and a newer attribute but recently arrived in the human gene, the moral faculty. It is the latter which is determinative of the character of our activity. On this sense hangs the survival of the species.

If morals are conceived of as conduct born of reason and training, they may be oriented at call both to the demands of a technologically organized society or to a given political structure. Custom and tradition may be made to order; morality will then be displayed as a relative thing, adjustable to varying specific demands according to the ascendant political influences of the day. Appropriate morality for the common citizen becomes but a matter of education and training of the young, with amendments of their

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Mr. Elsom, an investment officer of a bank, finds time for free-lance exploration and explanation of the libertarian point of view.

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ethical equipment to be supplied as necessary during later life by means of communication and entertainment media. Somehow though, this approach always brings wholesale death, imprisonment, and misery, for it involves an act of credulity difficult of achievement for the thoughtful individual against whom, in the end, force must be directed. He cannot go contrary to his own senses; he cannot repose confidence in the expertness and motivations of men in violation of his observation and experience. Religionists have seldom asked of him so great an act of faith.

If, on the other hand, morality is a life-growth; if it has had an orderly biological development, then the foregoing would be reversed: we would conform to its nature or sicken, just as our lives must accord with our anatomical structure. The formulation of ethics to support intellectually derived aims would be absurd.

Emergent Morality

There are clues which point to such a background; i. e., that the moral faculty rises naturally out of the processes of life. As a beginning, it is clear that the amoeba, a single celled creature, would be little perturbed by the state of right or wrong in its puddle. With many individual humans, moral acuity has attained high degree. Physical complexity, then, is a condition precedent to the perception of moral phenomena. If this were all, one could attribute the moral sense to the brain and nervous system. It would also put us back where we began – the erroneous concept that man's proper conduct can be purely a product of reason. Also, we are told that man has not changed noticeably in brain or other physical characteristic in thousands of years, yet his ways and mores have developed greatly.

A human being, however, is an organic whole. The brain is not insulated from the rest of his being. What happens in the liver affects the little toe; the function of the kidney has to do with heart and lungs. All exists in an organic medium, a physicochemical balance of blood, fluids, plasma, and lymph flowing through regional systems, organs and glands interchanging substances, regulating, accepting, rejecting. The organs have knowledge apart from the brain. If one kidney is removed, the other knows it and enlarges. In certain kinds of heart damage, repairs and growth offset the injury. Cicatrization is a cooperative effort of blood, corpuscle, and tissue.

Within the parts there is a sensing of things to come. Certain

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cells in the embryo aggregate to form a spleen. The brain projects a portion of itself, takes on a covering of skin which becomes transparent, then changes into lens, cornea, and proceeds to constitute a complete optical system for use after birth. Our examples can be multiplied endlessly.

Such a range of complexity conditioned the advent of moral awareness, such complexity and something more; for not all men exhibit response to moral stimuli. As we have shown, purpose and knowledge exist in the organs and the fluids, though not in terms understood by us. They abide far below the turbulent surface of consciousness. At these depths are systems of tension and energies, both physical and psychic. Modification of this inner balance by God or by Nature or by man, himself, through his will, can change what man is and what he may become. Differentiation of a portion of the species could well go unnoticed because no change of form or feature is necessary. Evolution would be subtle—slight variations of brain, nerve, or organic balance, hidden glandular influences, and so forth. Moral man and his predecessor can exist side by side, presenting to the world seemingly identical anatomy and outward appearance.

Are there clues to suggest that such developments have, in fact, occurred?

We think there are. Not laboratory proof, of course. One cannot compare the nervous structure of a citizen of Jericho ten thousand years ago with that of a New Yorker of 1963. Nonetheless, there are suggestive facts which may be displayed. To do so, we select but one thread from an immense skein. That one thread, we cut short.

Twelve Million Years Ago

Since the moral sense began with man, it is appropriate that we tie one end of our thread to amoral subman. Some anthropologists are willing to fix our origins in the Miocene period, twelve million years ago. Let us secure the knot then to Proconsul, an orthograde primate found in Miocene deposits in Lake Victoria, East Africa. Certainly not human, still he possessed brain, teeth, and body suggestive of human characteristics to come. Later nonman discoveries, *Australopithecus africanus, Plesianthropus,* and *Paranthropus* exhibited some of the morphology of man. They walked with his stance. The use of fire and clubs appear to be associated with these creatures. These finds are identified with the later Pleistocene period.

Next comes a truly debatable

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specimen, *Pithecanthropus erectus,* found on the island of Java in 1891. Man-like ape or ape-like man, we know not. Dr. Eugene Dubois, the discoverer, denominated *it* a superior ape. Identical features led Sir Arthur Keith, a British authority, to the conviction that *Pithecanthropus* was human.

Without exactitude as to sequence, it seems conclusive that the threshold of humanity was crossed by *Sinanthropus pekinensis* and *Homo Neanderthalensis.* This would have been in the late Pliocene or early Pleistocene period, say, one million years ago. With Sinanthropoid skeletons have been found quartz tools, fire hearths, and the remains of Pleistocene animals. He killed game, dragged it to his cave, and cooked it. Neanderthals were very numerous, finds having turned up at various locations in Europe, Russia, and Middle Asia. Skeletons are frequently accompanied by flint tools. In some instances, they buried their dead. The cranial capacity was above the 1,350 cubic centimeters normal to modern man, but their skulls were low-crested and marked by supraorbital ridges. They had receding chins and forward hafted necks. These features give them palaeoanthropic or primitive classification.

A Recent Development

Anthropologists give little explanation as to why primitive humans ceased to be or how or why neanthropic or modern man came upon the scene. He appeared suddenly. Cro-Magnon and neanthropic forms may have lived contemporaneously with palaeoanthropic versions. This fact provides clues to the moral state of both. Many *Sinanthropoid* skulls have the base broken out. Neanderthal bones show knife knicks and scrape marks where the flesh had been removed. Many of the bones had been cracked and the marrow extracted. Artificial enlargements of the *foramen magnum* indicate removal of the brain. It is quite possible that some other form of human, perhaps modern man, was systematically preying on these primitive individuals to the point of their extinction. Perhaps cannibalism was widespread. At any rate, only modern man remains and as he enters upon the stage, he is a killer; he is still burdened with bestial motivations, undiluted by moral stimulus.

How long ago was this?

A London dentist, Dr. Alvan T. Marston, digging in the gravels of Swanscombe, Kent, England, in 1935 unearthed a modern human skull. Fluorine tests showed it to be about 500,000 years old.

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The First Faint Sign

Here let us postulate something from our fancy – yet not altogether fanciful for probability forms our base. At some point in the past – no record can tell us where or when – one man, having grown from one unique egg cell, possessed for the first time in the experience of life on earth, a new faculty. It was like the rudimentary eye that cannot distinguish objects because its cells have attained only light sensitivity, not focus. Just so, the new faculty received intimations of the objects with which it was to deal, intimations so formless, so lacking in definition, that its possessor could not realize that he experienced anything at all. Yet so disturbing was it that it gave uncertainty to his cudgel, upraised above his guiltless brother.

Whether the club fell is immaterial now. What is important is that the wielder of the club begat offspring. Some of these, during other sequences of pillage and despoilment, felt the same disquiet. It had entered the blood of the species to scatter mutants through the centuries. At last it began to leave scratchings and wedge marks on stone and clay. With the unfolding of time, some of its inheritors could descry glimmerings of its form and meaning.

Archeologists exhibit to us an oblong of light brown clay, dried by a sun that shone upon the land of Ur four thousand years ago. Scarce four inches wide, less than eight inches long, its face is about that of a common brick. It is crowded with half-obliterated characters that comprise one of the oldest records of a legal code, that of one Ur-Nammu, deputized king of Ur by Nanna, its moon-god.

They show us also a stele of dark greenstone that stands as tall as the ceiling of a modern home in suburbia. It was found near Susa on the Persian Gulf in 1901. Its inscriptions make up a preamble, a set of laws, and an epilogue. It is the imposed code of a conqueror, Hammurabi of Babylon, who declared that he received it of the god, Shamash, 3,700-3,800 years ago. Enlightened beyond its time, it remained a product of conquest and self-glorification. Full weight was given to vengeance. There was no hesitancy in fixing commercial relationships, prices, and wages.

These writings are physical evidence of growth of the moral faculty. The idea of the benefaction of mankind was present. So was the idea that business dealings should be honest and that mere weakness did not justify pillage. True, all authority was

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founded on amoral conquest. True, the ego of the ruler was the consideration above all others. True, superstition, slavery, infanticide, and other forms of murder were sanctioned. Withal, these codes were the work of moral vision that could seek order and justice within a complex of human rights and obligations. They were light years above the bestiality of Neanderthal and early neanthropic man.

From the Land of Canaan

We fix our attention now upon the land of Canaan, otherwise Phoenicia. In the littoral at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, at Ras Shamra, two hundred miles or so north of Jerusalem, explorations in 1928-1929 revealed the ancient city, Ugarit. Writings discovered here point to a paradox in the growth of human morals.

These texts date from the latter half of the second millennium, B. C. Various languages were employed including Sumerian, Babylonian, Hittite, Egyptian, and Phoenician or Canaanite. This variety of tongues coupled with a broad range of art objects from Babylon, Mycenae, Egypt, and other far-flung cultures points to cosmopolitan sophistication in matters of commerce, art, and morals. Thus, the Canaanites were not a backward people.

Archaic Hebrew and Phoenician or Canaanite were one language. Their religious stem was the same. Canaanite writings lead directly to portions of the Bible. Daniel appears first in Canaanite literature. So do Adam and Eve. "El" or "Elohim" as a designation of God was common to both languages. Both partook of the same cultural tradition, were subject to the same conquests, stood in the same line of moral development. Before Moses, the codes of Lipit-Ishtar, Ur-Nammu, and Hammurabi had placed limitations on murder, stealing, lying, and other infractions. Sections of the Hammurabic code were carried over into the Old Testament, parts of Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Leviticus being seeming transplants of language and substance.

Abram, or Abraham, of Genesis was much among the Canaanites and scarcely superior to them. He could permit his wife to suffer the desire of another man as a measure of his own self-preservation. The slaughter of entire peoples did not offend his senses. These thoughts and acts agreed well with the mores of the times in the land of Canaan.

Who then could distinguish Hebrew and Canaanite? How were the Chosen Ones different?

Yet as we turn the opening

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pages of the Old Testament, Israel and Canaan are enemies. There is revulsion against ancient familiar idols. Rituals encrusted with centuries of tradition are now called perverted. Israel separates herself from her heritage.

But not all Hebrews. Their bulk remained as it was. They became homesick for idolatry. When Moses left them for but forty days, they made themselves a golden calf, worshipped and sacrificed to it, and "rose up to play." With Moses, Joshua, and Aaron dead, the people reverted to the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth. They wearied of theocracy and asked Samuel to depose God; their preference was to have a human king as did other nations.

Was it political factors then that worked the cleavage?

No, these were transient things of alignment and re-alignment, a continuing flow of advantage and disadvantage.

No, Israel became different in *kind* from her neighbors. The cultural stem remained, but there was a sudden increase, biologically speaking, in the vigor and acuity of the moral vision of a small group of men — the patriarchs and the prophets. The leathery old tribesmen became the new awareness and the conscience of the people. Their peculiarity affected the Semitic stem profoundly.

God Above Man

The thing that they saw most clearly was that man was less than he had thought himself to be. The laws of Mesopotamia, Babylon, and Sumeria were kingly impositions based upon conquest. Recitations anent the deities of their varied pantheon served the glorification of the ruler, added the force of superstition to that of edict. Other kings could utilize other gods or manufacture new ones. The Hebrew patriarch saw the falsity of this. God was not servant to human policy. He was not concocted out of expediency. The injunction was, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," and "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Moreover, they could see that the thread of life connected man with God. This being true, one's ancestors were custodians of the vision and bearers of the seed. The generations were a sequence of flesh and spirit, each the fruit of those long since transformed to dust. The generation which honored not gifts received or which despoiled posterity of its birthright would be aborted. The species must cling to the thread of creativity in order to endure (Honor thy father and mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee).

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They despised the predatory heart. The fixing of attention upon inevitable inequalities of person and possession was defined as covetousness and proscribed. A people could be secure only as its members were secure. What extraordinary fortune or skill could gain in righteousness, affection, office, or goods was, in the long run, to the betterment of the whole. Greed and envy could only jeopardize the entire body of society. The commandment was clear: "Thou shalt not covet."

The Prophets' Role

That the prophets considered their gifts as unique was inherent in their conviction that they had been chosen by a single, everlasting God. It is also clear that they held a narrower, more literal view of their invigorated sense as well. They adduced their knowledge as something they had seen or heard, since they knew no novel means of perception. Listen to Proverbs XXIX, 18, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Or Habakkuk II, 2, "Write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Or Jeremiah VI, 16, "Stand ye in the ways and see. . . ." They were talking about actual sense perceptions.

They were not reasoners as the Greeks were. They did not attempt to define their knowledge nor fathom its distant implications. Others were to accept their vision without question – it was the will of God. It was enough that they could fix the errant one with glittering eye and drive him with lashing tongue.

Neither did their heightened special sense work much change in men themselves. The Jew remained as superstitious as his neighbors. He was as brutally possessive of wife and child. Cruelty was common. Moses could instruct the Levites, "Go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor." More routine punishments for violations of the Law included stoning, execution by fire, and garroting. The tribes were still narrow, bigoted, savage. Hebrew thought was feculent with error. Hardness of heart was ingrained and unchallenged. One must remember, however, that the biological requirement at this point in history was simply that the moral attribute be viable, tough enough to live in a savage environment.

The Need Was Urgent

It was none too soon. Already the beginnings of mathematics and physics had taken place with the Egyptians, Greeks, and earlier

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peoples. The surveyor's stakes marking the road to $E = mc^2$ were in place. Its destination was inevitable – the extinction of man. Except for one factor. The teleology of life had functioned thousands of years earlier with the injection of moral unrest into that unknown primitive progenitor. Now it was evolved into the Law and the Prophets.

The Law and the Prophets were not enough.

They were inadequate to the necessities of the world that was developing. They were inadequate because their application was external, their acceptance involuntary. The Israelites were a bullied and frightened people. Understanding of the significance of the Law, there was none. It was constrictive of personality and choice because the patriarchs had not understood that they, themselves, were an outcropping of a deep inner life development. In Christ's phraseology, it remained for the Law to be "fulfilled."

Beyond Reason

What was necessary?

Was it not that the newest human sense be given equal, no, superior, status in relation to the older senses? This seems probable from Christ's teaching method. In his words we find almost nothing of syllogism, no abstract construction of theory, no laying down of a logical case. Rather, he seemed to aim at startling or surprising a dormant sense so that in a burst of unaccustomed activity it should break the surface of the subconscious to be seen and dealt with. He triggered unused psychic complexes in friend and foe – intuitions, insights, theretofore suppressed emotions. Parable, imagery, allusion, the shock of incredible assertion – in greater or lesser degree, these would provoke the inward sentience of his audience. These were no move to convince the intellect, but only the application of stimuli to which a special sense could respond. His struggle was frustrating. Listen to him in John VIII, 43: "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye *cannot hear* my word." He sought those who could respond: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Later, Paul was to expand upon this fact: ". . . the *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The phenomena had to be perceived before it could enter into the mental processes.

Inner Law

First, as Christ implied, one must see the real source of the

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law. Scribes and Pharisees occupied the position of lawgivers. Theirs was external law applied to the externals of man: his acts, his property, his outward relationships. Such lawmakers, "bind heavy burdens, grievous to be borne." True law is *in* the nature of things and *in* the nature of the human being (The Kingdom of God is within you). Christ knew that murder, for example, was the end product of an inner ferment; it was objectified anger or greed. So also, with adultery, theft, and the rest of the list. These were evil fruits whose roots drew sustenance from the older elements in man. True law would operate here, in the individual's own faculties.

This individualism should be cultivated at whatever cost. Many would suffer but some would succeed (Wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it). This was the hard fact: the destiny of the species depended on the toughness and wisdom of those possessing the capability of perceiving God and his creative principles of life. These were the things of God; Caesar had no proper function in them save to permit them to operate and to defend them.

Having developed this capability, men should sustain it in their consciousness, have faith in it, and be guided by it (Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind). By doing this, men could achieve freedom (Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free). But no man could be free who coerced his neighbor (Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself). Only through equality of respect for the conscience, responsibility, and volition of others could men become whole. Indeed, only through this sort of equality could the species be safe.

A Higher Goal

What was the reason of it all? Why the millions of years of struggle of life on earth? Its achievement of ever greater complexity of tissue, organ, and sense? To what end does man, by means of his new awareness, consciously strain to be something other than what he has been? Once more we turn our secular gaze upon the Bible.

The answers stated there can be encompassed briefly: joy, happiness, well-being. In Chapter V of the Book of Matthew, Jesus, in the first eleven verses, uses the word, "blessed," meaning a bestowal of happiness, nine times. In the twelfth, he tells us to "re-

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joice and be exceedingly glad." His expositor, Paul, in Ephesians, describes singing in the spirit and melody in the heart. There are many such examples, spoken in the shadow of mortal adversity. With the right sort of awareness one could see the principles of life, individual and social, which could free him from the crush of his terrible heritage. Such freedom, such resonance with divine pulse, would mean joy.

Moral Emphasis in the Declaration of Independence

That the possessors of the enlivened moral faculty grew in numbers, history evidences abundantly. The unique sense began to assert itself in "the things that are Caesar's." We overleap seventeen centuries to find them expressing what they have seen in a political document. We hear them saying, "We hold these truths to be self-evident," that is, phenomena to be accepted because exhibited to the senses. They were deemed to be true because they were the verified content of moral perception. They believed men to be creatures of God, under equal obligation, one to the other, each to the whole, to preserve and defend individual human effort to survive and achieve; to hold the individual harmless in the effectuation of any chosen purpose not violative of the personality or property of another, safety and happiness of the citizen being the explicitly stated objectives of proper government.

Some years later they draft an agreement by which they propose to live together. In it they said that men should be free to follow their personal routines in peace (insure domestic tranquillity). They should be safe (provide for the common defense). They were to be free from the vexations and dangers attendant upon personal settlement of disputes, unjust taxation, monetary chicanery, and caprice of government (establish justice, promote the general welfare). The generations were recognized as being bound together in sacred compact (secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity).

What echos of the patriarchs and the prophets! What magnificent assent to the "fulfillment" of the Law! How spectacular and undreamed was the harvest!

Still, there are those among us, historians and sociologists, who tell us that morals are no more than custom and environment; who cite other peoples in other places who believed in other rights and wrongs and other gods; who believe that the common man may be thumped and kneaded into any sort of thing that politics and

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technology may require. They work much grief – they withhold the animate part of the truth. Where the moral sense has not been nourished or has been diverted from its main direction, among great or little peoples, that nation or race has been stultified. Its exit from history has been a series of needless frustrations and pointless disasters clustered about a core of ethical error.

A Vital Attribute

The rewarding path is along the way discerned by the moral vision. It is a *vital attribute* even though many of our kind have not, as yet, acquired confidence in the stimuli it provides. Many of us continue to believe falsehoods which the use of this sense would destroy, even as some centuries ago some men had preposterous credulity concerning physical facts which disciplined use of their regular senses would have precluded. As a current example, many of us, evidently a voting majority, believe that individual wrongdoing can be transmuted into collective virtue; that individual sin can be purified by democratic ritual. We join together to vote ourselves exemption from the Decalogue, the New Testament, the Constitution, and the operations of Nature.

And because our disdain of moral principle is collective, because it is implemented by technology, never was human hazard greater. We have parted with the safeguards of variety, multiplicity, diversity of purpose, and limited means of ages gone. Our more satanic Caesars were but pranksters when set against the scale of our Hitlers and Stalins; these, in turn, dwindle before the looming potential. Only the active use of the peculiar sense can be of any effect against the drift of the times. Not to rely upon it is as foolish as to forego sight or hearing. It is at fearful risk that we continue to view its promptings as romantic idealism, scarce suited to the uses of this world.

Significant Growth

Moral awareness began in the jungle in men who were mostly beast. It was viable from the beginning, capable of surviving the wilderness; equal to growth amid bludgeon and ignorance. It had moved against all vicissitudes before history began. It stood up to stonings, crucifixions, hemlock, and the arena because it was tough. It is not weakened by sentiment. It is practical. Its goal is the wholeness of man because when man is complete, he is free.

From birth to birth, century to century, the communion spreads. Its members willingly wear the manacles of the spirit. Because

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they do, they cannot resort to force to thrust their knowledge upon others. They cannot rig voting blocs; they cannot bilk their brother politically, economically, or intellectually. They give but to those who seek. They demonstrate only to those willing to observe.

They look upon the mutilation of the earth, the poisonings of its soils, its winds, its waters, and its minds with sorrow. They can see great nations and great peoples sickened with the malady of centralized coercion, the symptoms affecting every member of the social body: the family, the arts, public and private morals, education, religion.

Strangely enough, they expect all of these things to live. They believe that the moral attribute was inserted into the species long ago for two purposes: to serve as a safety mechanism, and to sense the way in which it should go. Despite the moiling of historical waters, it has been effective on both counts. Observed from primitive beginning to formal expression in documents utilized in the founding of the greatest nation in history, the increase of the moral faculty as a factor in human destiny appears considerable. In view of its source, it is not likely that it will fall short of its objective – man as a whole creature.

Moral man, speaking of us all, may well join with the English Book of Common Prayer in the supplication, "Grant that the old Adam in these persons may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in them." History points in this direction. It is the direction in which the libertarian would go. ◈

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

A Double Standard

THIEVERY and covetousness will persist and grow, and the basic morals of ourselves, our children, and our children's children will continue to deteriorate unless we destroy the virus of immorality that is embedded in the concept of the welfare state; unless we come to understand how the moral code of individual conduct must apply also to collective conduct, because the collective is composed solely of individuals. Moral individual conduct cannot persist in the face of collective immorality under the welfare state program. One side or the other of the double standard of morals will have to be surrendered.

F. A. HARPER, *Morals and the Welfare State*

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Great Britain's Age of Economic Growth

GEORGE WINDER

THAT GREAT BRITAIN remains outside the closed economy of the European Common Market is not so much attributable to General de Gaulle as to Britain's determination to follow her tradition of free trade with the Commonwealth. The Common Market would place its external tariff wall against such trade.

When Great Britain repealed her famous Corn Laws in 1846, she had for over a hundred years been moving steadily away from the state controlled economy, then known as mercantilism, toward a system of free enterprise. The extent of the state control suffered by the British businessman before this movement began can be judged from a passage in Buckle's famous *History of Civilization in Europe* in which he describes mercantilism during the eighteenth century: "In every quarter, and at every moment, the hand of Government was felt. Duties on importation, and duties on exportation; bounties to raise up a losing trade, and taxes to pull down a remunerative one; this branch of industry was forbidden and that branch of industry encouraged; one article of commerce must not be grown because it was grown in the colonies, another article might be grown and bought but not sold again, while a third article might be bought and sold, but not leave the country.

"Then, too, we find laws to regulate wages; laws to regulate prices; laws to regulate profits; laws to regulate the interest of money; custom house arrangements of the most vexatious kind, aided by a complicated scheme, which was well called the sliding scale. A scheme of such perverse ingenuity, that the duties constantly varied on the same article, and no man could calculate beforehand what he would have

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to pay. To this uncertainty, itself the bane of all commerce, there was added a severity of exaction, felt by every class of consumers and producers. The tolls were so onerous, as to double and often quadruple the cost of production. A system was organized and strictly enforced of interference with manufacturers, interference with machinery, interference even with shops. The towns were guarded by excisemen, and the ports swarmed with tide-waiters, whose sole business was to inspect nearly every process of domestic industry, peer into every passage, and tax every article; while, that absurdity might be carried to its extreme height, a large part of all this was by way of protection; that is to say the money was avowedly raised, and the inconvenience suffered, not for the use of Government, but for the benefit of the people; in other words, the industrious classes were robbed, in order that industry might thrive."

This kind of economic system existed in the eighteenth century throughout Europe. The French writer, Blanqui, claimed that if it had not been for the smuggler during the eighteenth century, trade would have disappeared altogether.

Adam Smith's great work, *The Wealth of Nations,* pointing out the errors of mercantilism and advocating free enterprise and free trade, was published in 1776. This book more than any other single factor brought about Britain's conversion to the free economy and caused the famous Repeal of the Corn Laws seventy years later.

With this repeal and subsequent adoption of the Gladstone Budget, the right to trade with whom one liked both at home and abroad became for the first time a fundamental right of every Briton – a right cherished and exercised for 68 years. Not only were these years Britain's age of freedom, they also were her greatest age of economic growth.

The Temperate Dominions

Before this revolution in tariff policy Great Britain already had included within her Empire the three great temperate Dominions of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; but with the exception of Canada these were of little use to her. Many politicians declared they were nothing but liabilities, and there was particularly strong opposition to the annexation in 1840 of New Zealand – a country which then contained many more Maoris than British settlers. Australia was inhabited only by a few primitive tribes and scattered groups of settlers, and served primarily as a prison colony. Al-

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though the agricultural potential of these three Dominions was immense, this was not an asset much appreciated; for until Britain's conversion to free trade, all the world's governments believed that, where possible, food should be a home-grown commodity.

While Great Britain was a free trade country, it was impossible for her to favor her Empire, for the products of the whole world entered her ports quite freely. It happened, however, that the settlers of her three Dominions were the most efficient producers of the very commodities the poor and hungry people of Britain most needed. They made the most of the British market now wide open to them, and from then on never looked back.

British Trade with Canada

Owing to her proximity to the alternative market of the United States, Canada probably benefited less from the new system than did Australia and New Zealand; although, during the whole of the nineteenth century, Britain purchased more from Canada than did the United States. Between 1846 and 1913, Canada's export of wheat to Britain was multiplied seventy times. By the end of the nineteenth century, Britain imported four times as much wheat as she grew at home, and her people had become the best fed in Europe if not in the world.

Early in the nineteenth century, sheep had been imported into Australia. In 1840, Britain's imports of wool from all countries amounted to 49 million pounds. By 1886 she was importing 401 million pounds from Australia alone, and was turning it into increasing supplies of woolens and worsteds.

Today, Australia can sell her wool almost anywhere in the world; but in the nineteenth century the sale of this commodity to Great Britain was essential to Australian growth. The yearly British sales of all commodities to Australia during her 68 years of free trade were multiplied 24 times, while during the same period her sales to New Zealand were multiplied 100 times.

New Zealand Farming

Of the three temperate Dominions, New Zealand fits best of all into this picture of Commonwealth growth based on free entry into the British market. Her first great export was wool, nearly all of which for many years went to Britain. Then, when refrigerating machinery was invented, she supplied Britain with the greater part of her production of mutton and lamb. Again, when her dairy industry was developed, the

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greater part of its production went to Britain in the form of butter and cheese. Today 73 per cent of all the butter and 78 per cent of all the cheese produced in New Zealand is consumed in Great Britain. A third of the butter and cheese Britain consumes comes from New Zealand. In 1960, New Zealand's total exports to Great Britain were three times as great as to all the Common Market and European Free Trade Area countries added together. The farmlands of New Zealand could be correctly described as an overseas extension of the farmlands of Great Britain. Today, they are as much a part of the British agricultural economy as are the farms of Cornwall and Devon.

The United States is Britain's best single customer but the 13 million people of the two dominions, Australia and New Zealand, buy more from Britain than the 180 million people of the U. S., the figures in 1960 being of £383 million and £340 million respectively. If we add Canada, then the 30 million people of the three dominions buy more from Britain than the 160 million people of the six Common Market countries – in 1960 £602 million against £562 million.

If we could exclude wool from our calculations, the extent of Australia's and New Zealand's integration with the British economy could be emphasized still more. Wool, which accounts for about one-third of the value of the exports of both countries, is peculiar in being almost the only agricultural product which enters the majority of the world's markets free of duties. Against virtually all the other products of the two southern Dominions, the world presents an almost unbroken line of tariff barriers, like a great inhospitable cliff in which there is only one opening – that which leads to the British market. Without this opening, Australia and New Zealand could not have developed a very great part of their present trade or obtained the capital they needed for their remarkable growth.

Remarkable Economic Growth

If we consider poverty stricken Great Britain and her three undeveloped Dominions at the time of the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, and study them again before the outbreak of the First World War, after only 68 years of Britain's free trade policy, they present what must surely be the world's greatest example of rapid economic growth. The only comparable development is that of the United States during the same period. Within this short space of

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time the three Dominions had grown into great nations able to send armies to aid the mother country in her hour of need, while Great Britain developed in wealth and power, head and shoulders above all her continental neighbors. Between 1855 and 1913 Britain's national income quadrupled, while her population and standard of living both doubled. Between 1846 and 1914 her exports were multiplied 8½ times. Never has the policy of allowing men to buy and sell just as they like, free from state interference, been more completely vindicated.

Other Commonwealth Countries

I have so far confined my attention to Britain and her three temperate Dominions, but the effect of Britain's policy of allowing all Commonwealth goods free entry to her markets is also reflected in her exports to many other Commonwealth countries. In 1960 Britain's nearest neighbor, France, purchased British goods to the value of just over £2 per head of her population, and the United States of America slightly less than £2 per person. But the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyassaland purchased £6, Ceylon £6, Ghana £8, Malaya £4, Kenya £5, Singapore £20, Hong Kong £12, Jamaica £14, Trinidad and Tobago £33, and South Africa £15 per head. The trade developed with these countries during Britain's free trade era is kept alive today because she still applies toward them the rules of free trade and allows their products free entry to her markets, the only important exception being sugar.

Until World War I destroyed many firmly established economic ideas, the British people fully realized the great economic development free trade had brought about and the benefits it had bestowed upon them. The ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* published toward the end of the nineteenth century, reported: "The benefits of free trade experienced during the last thirty years are so generally admitted, that the advocacy of the exploded theory of protection is looked upon as a harmless whim which has no chance of popularity."

Progress Follows Freedom

It is sometimes claimed that Great Britain owed her nineteenth century supremacy to her ample supplies of coal and to being the first country to experience the industrial revolution. But this is to place the cart before the horse. It was because Great Britain was the first of all European countries to develop the system of free enterprise and follow it to its logical conclusion in free trade that she

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experienced and made such advantageous use of the industrial revolution and gained her supremacy.

In the days of mercantilism, she showed no such supremacy. In the eighteenth century when Britain began to abandon her state controls over commerce and production, France was by far the richer and more powerful nation in Europe with a population nearly twice that of Britain; but as Tocqueville tells us in *L'Ancien Régime*, France remained hidebound in her mercantilism right up to the Revolution. In fact, the all-pervasive control over the French economy exercised by the state was probably the chief cause of that cataclysm.

An example of the advantages accruing to Great Britain as a result of her adoption of free trade is provided by the great expansion of her merchant marine. In 1849 when she repealed her protectionist Navigation Act, she had a slightly greater merchant tonnage than the United States (4,100,000 tons, against 3,750,000) but the United States ships were by far the more modern and efficient and included the famous Baltimore clippers which were the envy of the world. In 1907, after 60 years of free trade, Britain's tonnage had grown to 11,485,000 tons – four times as great as that of Germany, the next most important maritime power – while that of the United States had shrunk to 871,000 tons. During these 60 years, Britain did not attempt to help her shipping in any way.

The End of an Era

Great Britain's period of free trade came to an end with World War I and the great depression which followed it. This depression caused many British people who had grown up in the complete acceptance of free trade to doubt its wisdom for the first time. Had they taken the trouble to look abroad, they would have discovered that comparatively free trading Britain suffered less from that depression than many protected countries.

In 1915, the first step toward protection was taken by Britain with her McKenner duties, followed in 1921 by her Key Industries duties, and then by a series of further protective tariffs. In 1932 she passed her Import Duties Act which imposed tariffs on most foreign products. Since then, her relative importance in the world has steadily declined.

Britain's departure from free trade, however, is not as complete as is popularly supposed, for her people have resolutely refused to place tariffs against the Commonwealth. With a few minor excep-

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tions, such as the sugar duties, Great Britain still retains her free trade system as far as her Commonwealth is concerned.

Her three temperate Dominions began placing protective tariffs against British goods before the end of the nineteenth century, and have increased them since, particularly after World War I; but Britain has virtually never retaliated. Her ports remain open to Commonwealth goods. Since World War II, however, she has subsidized her farmers and thereby undoubtedly done some injury to Commonwealth trade.

But Commonwealth tariffs and Britain's farm subsidies may be described as merely blemishes on what is still fundamentally a pattern of highly integrated and mutually beneficial Commonwealth trade. The channels of that trade have been cut too deeply during the nineteenth century to be easily obliterated.

Moreover, trade is a two-way street. By keeping her ports open to the products of Commonwealth countries, Britain enables them to earn large quantities of sterling, which is nearly all used to pay for British services and to buy British goods that move into Commonwealth countries in spite of their tariffs.

It would appear that once a trade is well established it takes more than the government of one of the parties concerned to destroy it. The Commonwealth countries may erect their protective tariffs, but as long as Britain's ports remain open to the free entry of their goods, the two-way trade continues.

The Real Reasons

Because the British people depend so much on Commonwealth trade, they dared not allow the European Economic Community's external tariffs to be erected against it. The Community's farmers, on the other hand, dared not allow the far cheaper Commonwealth food free entry into Europe because it would undercut their own products. They considered this too high a price to pay for Western unity. To the British people, a Western union which left out their 30 million fellow Britons overseas was no union at all.

Great Britain almost certainly would have joined the Common Market if she had not been required to place its tariffs against her Commonwealth. This opinion is supported by the fact that she has already joined the European Free Trade Association, for in this case no change in her economic policy toward her Commonwealth was required. Some even see in Britain's intention to

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abandon her tariffs against imports from the other members of the Outer Seven an extension of her Commonwealth economic system.

A Great Tradition

Had Britain's era of free trade been a mere incident of the past, safely relegated to history, the problem of her entry into the Common Market would not have been a difficult one. But her free trade past to a large extent still conditions her economy.

A hundred years ago, with her poverty stricken people pressing on her agricultural resources, she was in a desperate position. She solved her problem by allowing her people freedom to trade as they liked and to develop, unaided by the state, her three temperate Dominions into great agricultural economies.

Although these Dominions leaped to Britain's side in two great wars, it is now said that the British Commonwealth is a thing of the past. Politically, this may be so; but economically, it is as real as ever. And the instinctive realization of this fact finally decided the British attitude toward the Common Market. Perhaps Britons remember little of the moral and economic principles which made them great, but they feel that to impose the Common Market's external tariff barrier against the products of fellow Britons overseas, while allowing similar products into the country from Europe free of tariffs, would be an obviously unfriendly act not to be tolerated. Equally important, perhaps, they realize that such a policy would greatly increase the price of their food.

As a result, all the efforts of economic planners and politicians and the appeals of the Prime Minister himself, persuasive as he is, could not convince the British people that they should sacrifice the Commonwealth for the Common Market.

In British history, rapid economic growth and economic freedom have been inseparable. In the great debate on whether Britain should enter the closed economy of the European Economic Community many British leaders seem to have forgotten that habits of thought and trade, left by a hundred years of economic freedom, take time to destroy. ◈

Henry Hazlitt

THE REAL GAIN of foreign trade to any country lies not in its exports but in its imports.

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Hope Amidst Ruin

ANY ECONOMIC system, so Adam Smith said, can stand a certain amount of "ruin." *Essays on Liberty*. Volume X, consisting of essays from THE FREEMAN and other publications of the Foundation for Economic Education (Irvington-on-Hudson, New York, 448 pp. $3.00 cloth, $2.00 paper), is both a measure of the "ruin" we now have, and a warning that, unless there is a cut-off point somewhere down the line in the near future, the possibility of "standing" the ruin will have been irretrievably lost.

These essays chronicle the progress of a battle on a darkling plain. But one of the clashing armies on that plain is developing intelligent leadership. Picking about among the essays, one comes upon many hopeful evidences of responsibility in the fight against the encroaching welfare state. John C. Sparks, in his surgical piece on "Urban Renewal—Opportunity for Land Piracy?," laments the supineness of citizens who fail to protest the seizure of private property for redistribution to favored groups in fantastic and ill-advised slum clearance schemes. What Mr. Sparks has to say would seem to be generally true of most communities: They do not seem to grasp the immorality of compelling people in other cities, sometimes a thousand or more miles away, to pay for buildings that should be voluntarily financed by those who want them or need them.

But the "ruin" of morals that Mr. Sparks has set forth cannot be complete, for, a few pages later, the reader comes upon Ralph Nader's "How Winstedites Kept Their Integrity." This is a fine account of how a Connecticut mill town of 10,000 people rose up to reject a federal public housing

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project. The Winstedites were galvanized into action by a young housewife's letter in the local paper. When the revolutionists against the morally ruinous public housing scheme had finished probing the plans that had already been set afoot by the housing authority, they discovered that the need for the proposed new units was purely imaginary. New dwellings in Winsted were being built under private auspices at a rate commensurate with the annual growth in population. The housing authority had acted to start the public program going without really taking thought, attempting to grow, as all imperialisms do, simply because that is the nature of any state-endowed beast.

Socialized Medicine

In "The British Nationalized Health Service," George Winder carefully explores the "ruin" of British medicine that is being wrought by making the doctor the servant of the state, not the servant of the patient. The "ruin" is not yet complete, for even fourteen years of socialization hasn't been sufficient to kill off a fine tradition. But the handwriting is on the wall, for in the twelve months of 1960 more doctors trained in England and Ireland emigrated to the United States than in the entire period from 1930 to 1939.

But if the battle on the darkling plain in England is being lost, it is being won in Australia. There, as Mr. Winder tells us, the socialist government of 1946 adopted the same British system of putting doctors in panels and giving them tax-supported "capitation" payments for the number of patients assigned to them. But in 1952 a conservative government abolished the system, replacing it by insurance against sickness through private companies. If intelligent libertarian leadership can make a come-back in Australia, there is still hope for England itself.

Self-Reliance

Emerson and Thoreau, the great apostles of American individualism, are not much heeded these days. Indeed, the essay in this volume called "Emerson in Suburbia," by Samuel Withers, leads one to believe that the students of today don't "get" the old Concord preacher of the virtues of self-reliance at all. When Mr. Withers, in one of his suburban classes, brought up Emerson's statement, "Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members," a student asked: "What was the matter with Emerson? Was he angry at society?" The rest of the class echoed the same incomprehension of Emerson's philosophy.

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If this particular volume of *Essays on Liberty* had limited itself to a single pessimistic report on the modern influence of the Concord school, we might have considered that the individualist jig is up. But, a few pages on, we encounter Frances West Brown's "Thoreau and the Modern American Housewife." Mrs. Brown first met "Henry" in a college literature class. She wasn't enthralled by his *Walden* immediately. But at crucial stages of her life she found herself murmuring "Henry's" admonitions to herself. Working at a job that bored her, she thought of Henry's question, "What is this spending of the best part of one's life earning money in order to enjoy a questionable liberty?" The next day she quit the job. During her early years of marriage, "Henry" kept visiting her at odd moments. When she and her husband were not making much money, there was Henry to console them with his "My greatest skill has been to want but little." When washing and ironing seemed unbearable, Henry would say, "You are the slave driver of yourself."

The most heartening thing about Mrs. Brown's lifelong colloquy with Thoreau is that the wisdom of "Henry" rubbed off on the Brown children. If they had gone to the suburban classes taught by Mr. Withers, they would have turned them upside down, making Emerson as well as Thoreau into heroes for modern suburbia.

Government and Business

The battle on the darkling plain continues in Melvin D. Barger's "Could A.T. & T. Run the Post Office?" In other countries, so Mr. Barger tells us, the government has a monopoly of all communication service, whether postal, electric, or electronic. The result: deficits and poor service all around. In the United States the government maintains the post office at an annual deficit. But the privately owned and operated American Telephone and Telegraph Company is both efficient and prosperous, even though it has to submit to regulated rates. The comparison of post office and A.T. & T. speaks volumes for the principles of voluntarism that are so clearly set forth in the more abstract essays in this book – Dean Russell's "Freedom Follows the Free Market," for one example, or Leonard Read's "Can Opera Be Grand If Socialized?" for another, or Henry Hazlitt's "'Planning' Versus the Free Market" for still another.

The contrapuntal quality, weaving between pessimism and optimism, of this Volume X of *Essays on Liberty* would seem to be prime

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evidence that Leonard E. Read and his mates at the Foundation for Economic Education have no call to despair. The society that can pile up monstrous supplies of butter by deserting the principles of the free market (see Jess Raley's "I Like Butter") can also instigate a Wisconsin "Trees-for-Tomorrow" program to encourage free farmers to grow trees as an added cash crop (see the excellent "Who Conserves Our Resources?" by Ruth Shallcross Maynard). If we are sick in some places, we are healthy in others. The over-all lesson of Volume X of *Essays on Liberty* is that the battle on the darkling plain can go either way. But the libertarians are developing good captains, while the collectivists are failing to bring up young replacements for a leadership that is now growing old and cynical.

Who knows, maybe a majority will some day be capable of acting on the values of Edmund Opitz's "The American System and Majority Rule." Mr. Opitz thinks we will be back on the right track when people are capable of asking themselves, "Majority rule for what?" No doubt a majority should elect the President. But no majority should ever try to deprive a minority of inalienable rights. ◈

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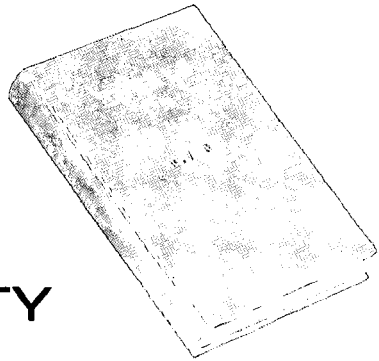

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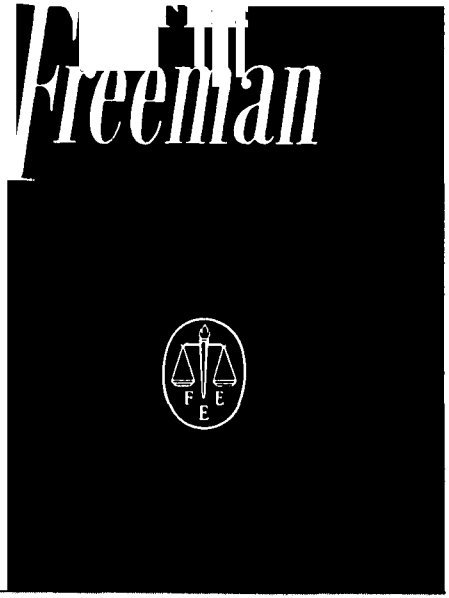

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